

THE HARVESTER
FOR
GATHERING THE RIPENED CROPS
ON EVERY HOMESTEAD
LEAVING THE UNRIPE
TO
MATURE

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THE HARVESTER:

FOR

GATHERING THE RIPENED CROPS

ON EVERY HOMESTEAD,

LEAVING THE UNRIPE TO MATURE.

BY

A MERCHANT.

—
"IS THE LAMB RASH THAT IS FEEDING IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES?"
"NOT IF HE TRUSTS THE GOOD SHEPHERD."

Proverbs of the Talmud.
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To
SCIENCE,

THE UNWRITTEN LAW OF GOD,

This Book is Dedicated

BY

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE following pages are the result of a constant and laborious study into the history of the rise, progress, and introduction to the world, of the various arts and sciences, and also a comparison of the incidents connected with the experiences of men who have advanced beyond their age in the development of literature or art, religion, politics, or trade. The subject grew so vast in importance and so interesting in detail (the experience of all men being so similar in their relations to society), that the best powers of my mind became thoroughly involved in sympathy with every effort of the men who in every age have struggled to advance into the mystic labyrinths of the great unknown. Having no other experience than that of a mechanic and trader, my mind became greatly exercised; and at times the most intense mental anguish would overwhelm me. In these seasons of sorrow, thoughts before unknown to me were forced upon my mind, which found relief only in writing out those peculiar thoughts which this little volume faithfully portrays. It is now sent forth to the world, like a stranger, to make its own friends by sincerity of conduct, and honesty of purpose. By this act my little book and I must part, after having long lingered together among the busy haunts

of human experience, mingling with the desolation of sad and sorrowing hearts, roaming amid the dazzling brightness of the joyous and the gay, traversing the wild-woods and mountains, wandering in the meadows and bogs, and gathering many forget-me-nots. And now good-by! I have done for thee all I can. Thy course will be through the thorns and briers of this world. The haughty will hate both thee and me; envy, jealousy, and pride will heap upon thee ridicule, abuse, and scorn: but if in thy wanderings thou meetest human souls who love thee as I have loved thee, take them to thy heart, and talk with them as thou hast with me. Thou wilt leave thy blessing wherever thou shalt go. Then go forth, strong and fearless, into the great harvest-fields of human life, a reaper: be thou the harvest lord, and bring home to God golden sheaves.

SEPTEMBER, 1868.

THE HARVESTER.

I.

IN surveying the past history of the world, we find all useful knowledge to have been the result of long and patient examination, often conducted amid severest trials and in spite of personal suffering. Every useful invention in art, or discovery in science, has in its development and progress been opposed by the violent objections of stupid prejudice, and has been finally adopted only when the heavy burdens of ignorance and superstition have been removed. Man first acquired the opinions which he afterwards fondly cherished, not by the exercise of observation and reasoning, but rather by his fancy and love of the marvellous, his hopes and fears. The earliest records of the past concerning all science consist of mythologic legends, and marvellous descriptions of the extraordinary qualities of the objects studied.

The orderly classification of knowledge has been a work of great difficulty. Beginning with a few real facts, it has then proceeded to construct speculative results, gathering together in the process all kindred data favorable for its purpose ; and thus from the frailest hypotheses have grown our best and truest systems of science. When the human intellect fairly began to apply itself to the observation of Nature, its progress toward genuine science soon became visible. Yet the study of tradition and mystery is often more grateful to man, even when he has been roused to intelligence and activity, than the study of Nature.

In every branch of science, the violence of religious prejudices has been alike severe. Man had so woven the legends and traditions of the past into his religious faith, that they had at last become sacred. And to these prejudices even very learned men gave in their sanction. It is not necessary to describe the silly opposition and the sorrowful sufferings which attended the establishment of the sciences of chemistry, astronomy, and even botany. Each, in turn, was met by the same stupid objections. Each of these noble sciences was the object of hatred, as if their success were destined to blast all

the future hopes of man. But, in all this development of knowledge, the human intellect has risen superior to the strife of bigotry and superstition, until it has reached still higher scenes. The sciences of physiology and comparative anatomy, and the doctrine of final causes, have led us into fields of thought magnificent and startling. The students of these sciences have adopted a principle of reasoning peculiar to themselves, which they call "the principle of the condition of existence," or "the principle of final causes." The laws they have established are so nearly allied to the Divine, that, in the investigation of these subjects, a man like Geoffroy St. Hilaire stops short, exclaiming in reverent awe, "I ascribe no intention to God; for I distrust the feeble powers of my reason. I observe facts merely, and go no farther. I pretend only to the character of the historian of what is."* While Cuvier boldly assumes, that, in the adaptation and construction of all animal life, the absolute intentions of God are discoverable, he proves by his researches that positive laws govern all animal life, so accurate and exact, that from a given bone of any animal he can reconstruct and determine

* Philosophie Zoologique, p. 14.

the species and the proportions of the creature to which it belonged, — a positive result which shows both the reality and the value of the truth on which he has wrought.

The learned and distinguished master of Trinity College, the late lamented Dr. Whewell, says of this principle and example of Cuvier, —

“ Thus we find ourselves at last approaching to a source of order and law and intellectual beauty. After venturing into the regions of life, feeling, and will, we are led to believe the fountain of life and will not to be itself unintelligent and dead, but to be a living mind, — a power which aims as well as acts. It is the religious hymn in honor of the Creator, and will roll on hereafter, the perpetual song of the temple of science.”

It is a plain axiom of life, that we know causes only by their effects; and, in order to learn the nature of the causes that affect us, we must study them through all the ages of their action, and not merely select the present period for examination. Every student of the natural sciences recognizes orderly laws, harmoniously leading to perfection; showing that man is governed in every effort and every work by unchanging, unalterable laws.

Henry Ward Beecher says, "There is not in all this wide universe one plant or tree, one shrub or flower, that does not contain within itself all the elements of its growth, whose nature is not stored with the principles of its own development and perfection." If this be true, then I assume that there is not one human soul in all this wide universe of God's creating that does not contain within himself all the elements of his growth, and whose nature is not stored with the principles of his own development and perfection. As we have seen the natural sciences starting from vague and seeming mystery, climbing up through all the difficulties of time and circumstances, establishing their own laws, so have I been encouraged to attempt to discover those more subtle and difficult laws that govern our intelligence or spiritual nature, and its connections with the Deity ; or, in other words, the true relations which we hold by law to our Maker.

I have examined this subject from my own standpoint, which is one of busy, active care, with the trials and vicissitudes of this life fully upon me. I have examined it, as I would any question in business, free from prejudice ; for I

believe that the laws by which the Almighty governs the universe, and the laws governing the human mind and its relations to the Divine Spirit, and the laws that govern our bodily nature and its connection with the soul, are principles for man to develop, and arrange in order, like the other principles of science. To demonstrate such a proposition, it becomes necessary to inquire into the nature of the causes that have governed the race in these relations. The first principles involved would necessarily be the mental qualities of man, which can only have reference to our spiritual nature.

Assuming that we are really Christian believers (by inheritance, if from no other cause), we will proceed to examine the higher intellectual or spiritual principles involved in our faith, and apply them practically to the discovery of our natural relations with God, and our connection with the laws that govern both mind and matter.

It has been the custom among all intelligent nations, when kings or rulers have important transactions touching the interests of their people or territory, to conduct them through delegated authority and by accredited ministers. All commands given by monarchs to their subjects are

transmitted through these ministers, who possess for this purpose all the power and authority of the king himself. Every kingdom of importance sends to all friendly nations delegated authority in the person of a minister plenipotentiary, who bears in his credentials all the authority and power of the kingdom he represents ; and each power demands for its minister the same respect and consideration that would be given to the king in person. Among all civilized nations, any violation of this rule is a cause for immediate war ; and this system of diplomatic intercourse has been strictly observed from very ancient times.

Nearly two thousand years ago, and in strict conformity with these rules, there was introduced to this world no less a personage than the accredited ambassador from the throne of Almighty God ; bearing in his credentials the full authority, wisdom, and power of the throne he represented, and fully empowered to establish among men the supreme law of the Father concerning us. Not only did he claim to be officially sent unto us ; but he announced himself as the rightful heir.

His arrival was proclaimed with all the sublime simplicity of the angel-world. The modesty of

his entrance into this world, and the spiritual sublimity of his angel-heralds announcing the event, indicate the authority of this mission in the person of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Short was his earthly life. His immediate teaching and ministry, from his baptism in the Jordan to his crucifixion on Calvary, covers only a space of about fifteen months; but, full of majesty, at the early age of thirty-three he was inhumanly and barbarously murdered by the only people then on earth who recognized God as the supreme power.

The events connected with his life and death, and the testimony of his followers, bear evidence to us in these latter days of the genuineness of his mission and the undying importance of his teachings. And since his death, through all these weary ages, multitudes have gathered around his standard, from all classes, nations, and races, — all anxious to do him homage. This vast concourse of people, of all conditions and habits, have committed themselves irrevocably to his cause, and have pledged in every conceivable form their adherence to him and his laws. And now it is impossible to repudiate his sway, or to rebel against it. But how stands the Christian world to-day, with all

its assumed knowledge and positive pledges, as compared with the teachings and truths of the natural sciences? Have we made the works of our God in this world, as interpreted by our daily intercourse with Nature, our religious study? Have we classified and arranged in orders their various workings and manifestations as revealed by this chosen messenger? Have we thus contributed to establish the truth of his ministry? Have we intelligently taken the teachings of Jesus, and applied them in a plain, practical manner to the concerns of life about us, that we may thereby prove them either true or false? for one or the other they must be: *there is no middle ground.*

No, no : this has not been done. Such a course would be condemned by the Church, positively forbidden by those holding authority. And poor Christian is allowed the privilege only of collecting the theories, opinions, writings, and experience of the ancients, and calling that the divine law. From this cause, the student of that highest science, theology, becomes a mere expounder of the fossil relics of past opinions; while the students of the laws of life around us have become the benefactors of our race. The laws of social science as ex-

hibited by Mr. H. C. Carey* are assuming vast importance. His system, as is well known to the intelligent students of his writings, is, "that the harmony of interests is the essential condition to the highest development of society. The laws governing the progress of society are the same which govern the various forms of matter, whether coal or iron, clay or corn, oxen or men. And this is supported by the developments of the laws of force as expounded by Grove, Meyer, Helmholtz, Faraday, and other eminent experimental philosophers. The principles assumed by these inquiries are simply these: that a force of immeasurable and resistless energy flows silently, gently, imperceptibly, through perfect conductors, supplying its currents of vitality to the whole organic world. Let this current be disturbed or hindered, and it blasts and crushes every obstacle encountered in its course; but, perfect circulation being established as a consequence of perfect development, this force flows gently through every member of the body politic, and general happiness and prosperity, improved mental and moral action, follow.

* Review of the Decade of 1857-1867, by H. C. Carey: New-York Weekly Tribune, Aug. 21, 1867.

When this circulation is interrupted, capital misused, and labor and honest efforts abused, this force is converted into thunderbolts and consuming fires. Rushing by a pathway of ruin, it will at last recover its balance by war, pestilence, and famine among nations, by frauds, murders, bankruptcy, and treachery among individuals."

That divine ambassador, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, was ushered into this world in accordance with the laws of his mission, which his life, teachings, death, resurrection, and ascension, together with his subsequent history, fully justify. He was what he claimed to be,—the Son of the living God. He unfolded in his teachings the entire philosophy of man's relations to man in this natural world, as well as our relations to God. He taught that the kingdom which he represented was real, and near unto this; that our relations to that kingdom were of more importance than our relations to this; and that our real advantage would lie in first seeking the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness, and then all other things should be added. Every principle in Nature, every development in the natural sciences, is teaching that the words of Jesus are being born into power; and is

showing to our dull comprehension that his laws are becoming the sole basis of all the laws of life. And in spite of bigotry and prejudice, superstition and ignorance, it will be proven alike by science, philosophy, and art, that the beautiful laws he introduced are the primal laws governing the human family. It will be the *ultima ratio* of all science and philosophy, that the teachings of Jesus Christ are in strict accordance with all the discovered laws of Nature; and, in their spiritual application to the intellectual growth of man, *must* lead to the very presence-chambers of infinite wisdom.

In the opening scenes of the ministry of Christ, the same simplicity is maintained as at his birth. The modesty of his deportment at his sublime baptism by John, and in the scenes that immediately followed, is imposing beyond description. Then, after gathering to himself such assistance as he needed from his few simple, unlearned neighbors, and after seasons of fasting, and contending with obstacles besetting his mission, he called his disciples unto him, and delivered to them in the presence of the multitude the principles and purposes of his mission, setting forth fully all the elements necessary for man to attain his kingdom.

His declarations are set forth in such terms as never before or since fell upon mortal ears. No kingly voice, no prophet or philosopher, ever uttered such an exordium. No statesman or legislative assembly ever promulgated such a system of laws. His exordium, setting forth the results that shall follow the practice of his law, is most perfect, and embraces the several beatitudes, beginning, —

“Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

After this magnificent introduction, he turns to the more special rules by which men shall attain these blessings, and says, —

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”

Following this, he details the whole law, plainly and unmistakably setting forth all the details in which our positive obedience is required; and he closes with these remarkable words: —

“Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds

blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell not ; for it was founded upon a rock.

“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house ; and it fell ; and great was the fall of it.”

Every encouragement he gave, every warning he uttered, has a meaning far deeper than those who have had the especial care of the words and teachings of Christ have ever given. In view of the real intent and import of his language towards mankind, those people seemed benumbed and dumb. His words are not the siren words of the poet or philosopher, coming down to us through these vast ages to lull us into repose. They are words of real meaning, teaching a science, a law, a purpose and intent in the concerns of man, beyond every other utterance ; and as such they must be accepted.

What human soul is there to-day that is not made better by the relation of the incidents of his gentleness and love toward the poor erring mortals to whom he gave his blessing, — the man-for-

saken, man-neglected beings who clustered around him, and made a part of his life and history? These are the ones upon whom humanity to-day looks back lovingly, trustingly, and hopefully. The gaudy, richly-clad temples of the past hold none of the affections of man, but are as the grandeur of Solomon or of the Cæsars. Those rich Jews who flung into the treasury their pounds of solid gold, are, like their gold, forgotten; while the poor widow, who cast in her mite in silent humility, moves every heart to sympathy. Mary Magdalen, the wild and reckless prodigal son, and the poor laborer who went to labor in the very last hour, fill our hearts with throbbing interest. The proud Pharisee, the haughty priest, or conceited Levite, who neglected the wounded man by the wayside, have no respect from human hearts; while the humble Samaritan, with no pretensions to holiness, holds a high place in our memories, and is spoken of reverently as "the good Samaritan." Who were the men on whom fell his words of correction, his severe criticisms, his bitter rebukes? What relation did they hold to society, to the church, and to the state? Answer in your own hearts, and learn the meaning of Christ's

science ; for it is no part of my purpose to read over the lessons of childhood, or to portray the touching lessons of Jesus in their aspects of affection.

But it is my purpose and intent to bring home to the understanding the startling facts which now surround us ; for we are intellectually nearing that point where the worldly and heavenly shall meet ; when men shall see knowledge and truth, like the angels of heaven, ascending and descending upon the Son of man, and no mystery in it. We have grown intellectually to this, and to this end we are co-workers.

There are laws and principles in the teachings of that sublime delegate, which the rubbish and folly of past theology have entirely hidden from view. The whole law is fully set forth in that wonderful Sermon on the Mount, the principles of which are clearly indicated in the memorable interview with the woman at the well of Samaria, when Christ says to her, "If thou hadst known who it was that asked thee, thou wouldst have asked of me, and I would have given thee of that living water that should be in thee a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." How ? Clearly

and only by the enlightenment of her spiritual nature, by means of which she might hold in abeyance the surrounding elements in strict conformity to the laws of our being. To all this we have been more thoroughly blinded and stultified by the superstition and bigotry of the past than were the students of the sciences. We have been in a far more trying condition, because the assumed sacredness of the subject has fettered every honest effort to enlighten us by the awful word "infidel," sealing in silence every practical aspiration. But these benign and generous teachings of Jesus are borne on the wings of heaven in upon us through the enlargement of the intelligence and the cultivation of higher thought among the people.

Men must have charity and love for one another, or Christianity is a fable. As we look upon the interests of man as an intelligent child of God throughout the entire world, we perceive this to be the needed element. This great principle of forgiveness must and will have birth. The clouds that hang so darkly over us are pregnant with the glory of that birth. We hear all around us the pattering feet of angels, like raindrops warning us of the coming storm. Inspiration made the grand

announcement that all God's laws are true and unchangeable, and from everlasting to everlasting. Science has confirmed that announcement, and the intellect accepts it. It is for man to discover the true operation of those laws in his intellectual and spiritual relations with his Maker.

Back as far as we have any known records, we find the laws governing the human race in its relations to the Deity the same. All the admitted records of Moses in his dealing with the children of Israel bear testimony to a tangible law by which Moses was instructed; not a superstitious idea, but an absolute law, by which the fact was accomplished. Through the entire history of Moses, this law is apparent. Certain results follow certain causes as surely as the night follows the day. Through all the changes of the Jews, this law is absolute. Prophets acted upon it, and saw wonderful visions of the future, and pronounced sublime declarations of things to come; and by it frequent and terrible warnings were given to men, as well as encouragement and hope. Men were inspired and moved to speak upon great themes; and "*Mene, mene, tekel upharsin*," was written by unknown hands upon the walls of buildings, all

in conformity to absolute laws. The traditions and histories of other nations amply prove the same law among all races of men, according to their peculiar habits and customs.

Knowledge has unfolded to us that the lightning's flash is the result of the overcharged atmosphere ; yet there is a law governing its existence which renders it manageable. By it, men of to-day talk with each other from continent to continent, and do not presume that it is the voice of God : yet it is the voice of God as really as that spoken to Moses on Mount Sinai ; but, because we understand it, all mystery and superstition vanishes. So these superstitious mysteries clustering around God's dealings with men will vanish with the advance of light and knowledge.

The same law that gave to Moses the astonishing truths which he announced to the children of Israel, gave also to the world the more startling announcement that the Prince of peace was born into this our world, and with him peace on earth, and good will towards men. The same law will unravel all this mystery, and make all things plain, by the simple process by which all other laws are made plain, — by observation and study into the

natural laws governing our life, and by comparing them with the grand teachings given by Jesus.

Every religious theory with reference to the laws of matter in the past has proved to be wrong in itself, and a hinderance to progress. There is not an instance on record where intelligence had discovered from the workings of Nature some new system of action, in which religious superstition did not vigorously oppose it on the assumed ground of its violation of the inspired law, even down to the invention of printing; and sometimes even on purely moral questions, as on the great question of human slavery, advocates were not wanting to prove by the sacred word of God that the black man was intended for a slave.

These experiences show that the men who give rules for the government of the so-called Church of Christ on earth do not understand the laws of its existence, or the application of the principles established by its divine Head. They are precisely in the position of the Pharisees. Clearly there are laws and principles involved in the establishment of the Christian faith as revolting to the proud heart of man to-day as to the Jew of early times. The Pharisee in his day was considered a sterling man ;

according to the notions of his time, a sound, law-abiding man ; performing all the duties then known to belong to a good citizen ; loving God supremely, and obeying the law of Moses and the prophets. The modesty of the laws of Jesus was their stumbling-block. The unheard-of submission proclaimed by him, — the command to do good in return for evil, and to love those who abuse and despitefully use us, — was to them a revolting and intolerable requirement ; and the grace with which the Christian Church has accepted that law may be best determined by examining its past history.

But let us turn to the more practical laws developed by the great Head of the Church. Passing over the events of the life of Jesus, — familiar as they are to all, and so fraught with wisdom that a life-long study would hardly suffice to illustrate them, — let us consider what happened shortly after his crucifixion. Let us contemplate a true Pharisee, in the vigor of his youth, and in the full bloom of Jewish zeal. I refer to Saul of Tarsus, who went forth armed with full powers from the high priest, and sustained by the Roman government, to destroy these despised Christians. His first memorable achievement was the death of the

devoted Stephen, who was so like the Master in his teachings, so forcible in his earnest honesty and the direct appeals which he made to the Jewish understanding, and so bitterly galling in his allusions to their past history, that the people, gnashing on him with their teeth, thrust him out of the city. and stoned him to death. But he, like Christ in his agony, besought the Father not to lay this sin to their charge ; and those who brought about his death went and laid their clothing at the feet of Saul, as was the custom, in testimony that he had directed them. While some devout men gave Stephen a respectable burial, Saul started in pursuit of others, with his commission in his pocket, his officers by his side, his heart full of wrath, on the road to Damascus. At mid-day there blazed about him a strange light : he was stricken blind ; and a voice spake to him, ordering him to desist from his course. They who were with him heard the voice, but did not see the light. Were these events without parallel, and wholly at variance with the laws of God ? or were they strictly in conformity with those immutable laws ?

Let us continue with this young man,—a true representative of what he should be who accepts

the ministry of Christ. In a mysterious manner, Saul was told what to do ; and others, in the same singular fashion, were instructed where to find Saul, and what they might expect would be done. All was performed exactly as had been told them. This would seem to indicate some supernatural operation, some special miracle, did we not possess records of similar events. Many like transactions on record point to the great fact, that a law, existing from the beginning, underlies all such proceedings. Proceeding farther, we find this headstrong Roman, Saul, broken down in his pride, and humbly preaching the great truths which he had so violently opposed ; and we are startled at the results. Though he had never been personally with Jesus, nor partaken of his counsels, we find him possessed of wonderful powers. His word became potent, his language prophetic ; and his presence restored the sick and weary to health and strength. But there is no violation of law here. Throughout all history, numberless examples are given, which prove beyond cavil that all such events are controlled by the absolute laws of God. Paul is a type of the devoted follower and preacher of the teachings of Jesus. His belief was forced upon him by the

laws governing his spiritual nature, as the lower laws of violence and hatred, acting through his pride and self-conceit, had culminated in the death of Stephen. With the re-action, he became receptive of the diviner laws of love, until they became visible in the form and manner described by himself. Between him and the great truths he proclaimed, there was no middle ground. To him it was every thing or nothing. He made the plunge unconditionally, catching hold of the great and unerring laws which govern the race, proving the reality of the things proclaimed by Jesus, and the immutability of those laws of God which connect the soul of man with himself. The operation of these laws is repeated whenever and wherever the terms are complied with, be it known to us, or not. In various forms it has made itself known. It was familiar to many of the early Christians as late as the third and fourth centuries. And in Emanuel Swedenborg, in Joan of Arc, in George Fox, and the whole body of ministers of the Society of Friends, in many of the outbursts in the prayer-meetings of the Methodists, in multitudes of smaller evidences of visions and voices, in warnings and guardings, in the strange history of Scotch witch-

craft, in the witches of our own country, and in the more modern experience of what is called Spiritualism,—in all this we find the same governing law; though differing in its manifestations, yet never new or strange or marvellous, save as the ignorance of man has made it so. In the experience of Saul of Tarsus, as related by himself before King Agrippa, there can be no room for just doubt. He was a respectable citizen, in favor with both Jews and Romans, and held a responsible position, which no slight pretext would have induced him to give up in order to take service in a cause wherein, as he knew, nothing but suffering could be expected. But if we accept his statements only in so far as they illustrate Christian doctrine as proclaimed at Rome, or by any of the organized sects of to-day, we shall find ourselves at fault. Paul's whole experience is of vast importance, illustrating great laws of practical utility to every human being. The intensity and severity of the sufferings he endured are undoubtedly true. They were the laws of God, bringing him to that spiritual birth through which he was born again. The results to his immortal soul he boldly proclaims to the world. Through these sufferings he shows the greatness

of the conflict that is waging between this world and the eternal, the incalculable distance that separates the laws of man from the laws of God.

He says, —

“Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels, though all power is given to me, though I have faith that could remove mountains, though I give all my goods to feed the poor, though I give my body to be burned, and have not *charity*, I am nothing: I am as sounding brass or tinkling cymbals.”

The experience of Paul confirms that of previous generations, so far as an intelligible account of it has come down to us. It shows that all the singular relations and doings of the worthy and reverend men of the past, the prophets and saints of olden time, whom we love to honor, were in conformity to the law of God. No less so are the more astounding words of Jesus, when he says, “He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father.” Thus it would appear that this is the special prerogative of the Christian, purposely granted by Jesus, that by it his followers might be distinguished. *There*

is no other. The students of theology ought, ages ago, to have developed this statement, and would have done so, had they been compelled to apply the searching experimental examination to which all other sciences are subjected ; for all science is simply the correct road leading to the ultimate truth concerning the things we seek. A good farmer seeks to know the whole truth in the development of his farm ; and, in conformity thereto, to bring it under the best treatment, that he may thus obtain the greatest returns. The sea-captain seeks the best knowledge that can be had of his ship and her equipments, all the facts concerning his voyage, all the beacon-lights and dangerous shoals lying on his course, that thus he may make the most successful journey. So of every trade, art, or calling in life, as well as of every known science. But what have theologians been doing in the most important study that can interest human souls, — our own personal relations to our heavenly Father ? The Roman Catholic, the Mohammedan, the Chinese, the Church of England, the Buddhist, or the Orthodox systems, — in short, the whole theology of every sect on earth, — what is it but stultified ignorance ? There is not an idea

in it all that really lifts a man up to his God in the attitude in which God made him. But we are absurdly taught to believe, that, by some wonderful supernatural process, we become saints through the sorrow and suffering of some other person.

From this sad reflection let us turn our thoughts to Bethlehem of Judæa; — to that lonely stable where was ushered into this world that sweet and lovely babe, Jesus of Nazareth. Without certificate or recommendation from any human authority, there he was in the most lowly condition, yet possessing within himself authority over this entire world. A few true and earnest friends gathered around his standard, and supported him; and their faithful testimony has kept in the minds of men to this day the fragrance of his simple teachings. Willingly they suffered for his sake persecutions and distress. The long years that have passed but feebly bring to us the evidences of what he preached. Look about this city! Here and there we see a few spires in varied forms, all bearing tokens of belief in that pure babe. And among the cities of the world, one by one these spires cluster in multitudes, in regiments, and armies; all pointing in solemn silence to heaven.

Each spire is an oath of allegiance to that humble child. Each worshipper at their various altars believes that child still lives in the eternal, future world. If he lives in that world beyond, then all human souls live there also. If we could but lift the thin veil that divides the mortal from the immortal, if we could but look into that eternal world, we should there behold myriad hosts intelligently gazing upon us. Instead of that one child, we should have millions upon millions of living human souls, all telling us the same undying truth, repeating the same grand words, "Love one another."

Long ages have passed since Jesus left with men this important command. Days have passed into months, months into years, years into centuries, and centuries have been piled upon centuries, and still these words are fresh and dear to the soul of man: and from violations of this law, sorrow and tribulation flow as the inevitable result; for that law of love is positively at variance with the law of the world. The whole principle of divine law, in its application to men, is opposed to the laws which men have established. Hence the prevailing discord. The attempt to reconcile these two prin-

ciples, on the ground of a decent show of conformity to the divine law, is simply an attempt to do what *cannot* be done. The principle is as true to-day as when the words were first uttered: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

The Roman Catholic felt toward the Protestant precisely as did the Jews toward the Christians. The religious world bearing the name of Christian feels exactly in the same manner towards every one who worships God according to a standard different from its own. The same worldly principle governs them all.

The Greeks, Romans, and Jews felt no compunction in cruelly slaughtering men and women who assumed to worship God in a manner proscribed by their rules. The same principle is still in existence, though it has become more refined. Instead of committing men and women to the tender mercies of wild beasts, the rack, and the gibbet, their reputation and character is undermined, and their usefulness injured by bad names and reproaches. The natural worldly selfishness underlies all this; but in these latter days it has been modified to make a show of conformity to the divine law of love. The cases referred to by our Saviour plainly

exhibit these principles of our nature. The Samaritan and publican in their day were men of no religious character or consideration. They were not regarded as exemplary men. The overflow of religious zeal and venom could be heaped upon them with impunity. He pictures these two classes to illustrate the operation of the law commanding us to love one another. He places the publican in such an attitude, that no man can possibly mistake his meaning. He also places before us the worldly religious citizen, both in the most sacred place known to man, — at *the hour of prayer*. There they stand! the Pharisee, or religious man of the world, thanking God that he was so good; and the publican, or sinning man, sorrowing that he was so bad. There they stand! There immovably will they stand, more enduring than marble, teaching forever the wisdom of God's laws, and the folly and weakness of the laws of man.

No better evidence can be given of the certainty with which the eternal laws of God are executed among men than the experience through which this nation has recently been called to pass. The fiery ordeal which the American people has traversed is a monument in honor of the laws of

God. Less than a century ago, the people of this country assumed a great trust. They proclaimed formally to the world these solemn and important words: "We hold these truths self-evident, that all men are created free and equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; among them, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Noble words are these, and in perfect accord with the teachings of Jesus.

Underlying these splendid assumptions, one of the selfish principles of worldly pride — human slavery — was lurking; twisting and turning in all the shapes and forms known to error; striving to maintain its supremacy by tempting us in every possible form. In words we had proclaimed a truth; in practice, a lie. Yet, in spite of all, this nation grew in strength and power, extending its influence to the uttermost parts of the earth. With it grew this vile error, until in its pride it made to this nation the same proposals which Satan made to Jesus; demanding that all the noble elements of freedom should submit to its mandates. One or the other must fall: there was no alternative. Like the tornado, like the thunderbolt of Heaven, like a mighty rushing torrent, war burst

upon us, cleansing and purifying. It was God's war. All that error installed in pride and power could do had been done by the enemy. He had corrupted the people. He had bought himself into power. He had bargained away the interests of freedom. He had sent to distant lands our ships of war, stolen the treasures of the nation, taken to himself our arms and munitions of war, and hurled defiance into the teeth of freedom. Of necessity the nation soon gathered together its powers, and concentrated men and means in the work of defence. At Bull Run the contest began; and on that sabbath day the proud army of the Republic was driven from the field in defeat! Was that God-given principle, human freedom, defeated? Was Liberty shorn of her laurels? No. By that very defeat, liberty was saved from the power of arrogance. Through unutterable anguish and tribulation, by seas of human blood, we have atoned for this wrong. God's laws have triumphed; and to-day the brightest jewel in the diadem of America is that Declaration of Independence made by our fathers, July 4, 1776.

Thus always are God's laws faithfully executed, whether man will, or no. Sooner or later they will

assert themselves with terrible power, in all circumstances and under every condition, in small things and in great, in the most extended affairs of human existence as well as the most minute. They go on tearing through, ploughing up, trampling down, every thing that is contrary to his eternal will. Hard as they may seem to us, these laws save and adorn us ; for it is the evil and error of worldly wisdom, with its perennial arrangements and contrivances in imitation of God's laws, that is pulled down and destroyed. This is the first of the lessons which were given to the Christian world when the Divine Messenger was brought into contact with the Devil. The fiend's proposals were entirely of a worldly and material character, profoundly adapted to temporal success. But Jesus, knowing the heavenly laws, and perceiving the higher principles involved, hurled Satan behind him. This scene of the Temptation is very little comprehended by traditionary theology. It bears upon its face the marks of reality, and shows most plainly the two elements of human existence : on the one hand, the present world and its interests ; on the other, the eternal world and *its* concerns. The Devil's proposals are thoroughly adapted to

worldly success, should there be no higher expectation than this world. They are strictly competent to attain the desired end of worldly grandeur and prosperity. Had Jesus, with his known powers, ignoring the future world, accepted either of these proposals, he would have been successful. He would have avoided the cruel persecution and the torturing death; for he was abundantly able to do all that the Devil suggested.

None of the heathen ideas concerning Satan, nor even the theological conceptions of him, give the true thought involved in this personage. He is certainly not the deformed, misshapen character we have been instructed to believe in. He is the charming representative of worldly honor, full of all subtlety and temporal wisdom, ready in every emergency to offer his services on the side of worldly renown and material success. In all respects, he is the prince of this world. He holds to-day the same position as when he spoke with Jesus on the mountain. There they stood, — both fully intelligent, each conversant with the authority, aim, and destiny of the other, each thoroughly acquainted with the laws governing heaven and earth, and both living realities. Considered mere-

ly in a worldly point of view, the proposals of the Devil are strictly fair and honorable: for, to take the first proposition, Jesus certainly had the power to cause the stones to be made bread; and they both knew it. Such an event would have given him worldly renown, had he chosen to take advantage of it. He might have become at once honored and esteemed; but, knowing the depth and extent of the heavenly law, Jesus chose rather contumely and abuse in this life, with the execrations of the multitude. He gave his answer, which Satan fully understood, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." But, not content with this summary defeat, Satan comes forward again with a fresh proposal, more subtle and intricate, by adopting which Jesus might at once obtain worldly renown and honors. By throwing himself from the pinnacle of the temple with impunity, Jesus might have obtained immediate control of the popular mind; beyond doubt, he might have been installed as ruler of the people of this world. But here, again, Jesus reverts to the great law of God, which was paramount in his mind. Equally paramount in the mind of Satan was the worldly

view : but he fully recognized the truth and power of the words, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God;" and he knew that they demolished his argument and his hopes of success. Yet he makes one more proposal, his last and best, filled with worldly lust and pride, — riches, honors, reputation, every thing the world can give, should be given to Jesus if he would simply recognize Satan as his chief, or bow to him but for once in recognition of his authority. Now came the grand, unwavering answer. Knowing full well the subtlety of the powers of this world, the caprice of man, the neglect and suffering that were to be his portion, Jesus repeated these great words, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Thus, with unfaltering faith in the future life, he put the world and its enjoyments under foot, casting Satan behind him.

To call this scene a myth is to lose its great lesson. It is no myth or traditionary story to frighten children. These incidents are real in their relations to man. Every human soul is constantly surrounded with this influence and power. The only question to be settled is whether there be a future life toward which we are all tending. If

this be settled, there remains in this enlightened age no question that the fact is natural; for, in all the departments of human experience, the spirit warreth against the flesh, and the flesh warreth against the spirit. Not a proposition for an improvement or reform of practical importance ever was or can be instituted among men, that this conflict or war is not instantly inaugurated. Not only is this true in moral and religious questions, but in all matters of human concern. There is not a plant or shrub without its counterfeit and its opposing enemy; not a field of grain without its tares and its besetting evils; not a ploughed acre without its weeds; neither a thinking mind without this conflicting war; not an invention in mechanic art, development in science, or advance in literature, that is not beset by pirates and hordes of vampires, that regularly and persistently invest every avenue to progress or advancement. This always has been, and it is fair to conclude always will be. The only remedy man has is found in the past experience, — to conquer by superior intelligence and patience.

It is not all of life to live. Were we not immortal, we should have no shadowy whisper-

ings from the other land. Did the soul find all its happiness amid material things, we should have no longing hours, no goings-out and comings-in of the soul, no restless yearnings for a better life. But intellect alone is cold and lifeless; knowledge alone is a tree bearing no fruit; while the foliage of Wisdom blossoms with love, and on her flowers descend the warm dews of affection, teaching man that God is love. Love alone will give life to intellect, and fruitage to the tree of knowledge.

The outer, visible life is but a frail shell enclosing the life-germ within, — that which shall burst when the mortal claims her particle of clay. We must look to the inner life if we would know of immortality. There alone can the demands of the soul be met. Neither rites, nor forms, nor rank, nor title, nor heritage, can pass the soul to God. The inner man is the shrine where God speaketh; and, to understand immortality, we must pass beyond this outer selfishness, and come near the sanctuary of divinity enshrined within each human soul. This is Christian doctrine universally accepted. Is it not also Christian to believe that there is a future world peopled with human souls? For all souls are God's. He made them all as immortal as him-

self. All who have passed beyond our finite sight are living now in that future world. The founder of the Christian faith taught us that he came from that world. He perfected his mission, launching upon our world the law of God. He performed his work, perfect and faultless. It is for us to learn its application.

II.

CONSIDER the immensity of the spiritual powers of man, the extent of his comprehension, and his power of adapting all circumstances to his own ends. Sea and land are compassed ; river, plain, hill, and valley are all brought into use ; fire and water, cold and heat, every namable thing on earth, is made to submit to the requirements of man. Fire, wind, and water do his work, and the lightnings his errands. Throughout the world we see his intelligent work, converting all the crude elements of Nature into beauty and usefulness. How, then, is it possible to doubt that man is destined to hold a place in relation to his Creator which he has never yet reached, nor even dared to consider ?

In the deep meaning of Christ's teachings, in these facts concerning man's spiritual nature, we perceive man himself to be the great object of divine solicitude. The clear though simple accounts in the Gospels fully establish this fact. Destroy all superstition, bigotry, and partisanship, and we find

in those writings lucid descriptions of the nature of man's inner being and of his grand destiny. The Jews could not and would not receive the spiritual teachings of Christ. But to-day, deep within every soul, that doctrine seems natural; and it plainly tells us of the immortality of man. It is beyond the power of any theory or dogma to controvert it.

Take the simple story of the angels ministering to Mary and Joseph amid all the events attending the birth of Jesus; that wonderful announcement to the simple-hearted shepherds on the plains of Judæa; their direction to the wise men to evade the cruelty of Herod; their earnest talk with Joseph in his dreams,—all this speaks to every soul the truth that this personage was no other than a heavenly ambassador, bearing from the immortal world important instructions for man. As we thoroughly consider the care of the angel-world for our Saviour throughout his recorded life, we find every reason to believe that those ministering angels possessed in the highest degree the warm and earnest affections belonging to human souls. Jesus in every act acknowledged the power and goodness of the angel-band, and the heavenly

influence of the Spirit. By them he was led into the wilderness, that he might test the strength of his wisdom in coping with the cunning devices of artful spirits. His own deep knowledge saw through their cunning artifices, and he was safe. What a thrill of joy must have filled those angel-souls as they watched that anxious hour — as is indeed sufficiently manifested by their instant approach, after the triumph of Jesus, to minister to his wants. Throughout his life these heavenly hosts were ever with him for strength and comfort as well as for discipline.

There can thus be no doubt that Jesus was conversant with the great laws of spiritual existence, and their relations to us as members of the family of God. The great burden of his teachings would naturally be to tell us what angel-life is, to unfold to us the certainty of it, and to indicate our connection with the world to come. The facts presented in the Scriptures clearly demonstrate the reality of angel-life. Peter, James, and John were taken by the Saviour to the Mount of Transfiguration, and shown, as had shortly before been promised, the reality and glory of that world beyond, — the kingdom of our God. Peter, in his

ecstasy, tells us of its reality. For within the glory and grandeur of that scene these men saw Moses and Elias talking with Jesus. The Father's sublime voice was heard owning and recommending his beloved Son ; and the poor men who stood there were amazed and overwhelmed by the glory of that heavenly realm.

The histories of Peter, John, and Paul, clearly show what labors of love the angels performed. In the Revelation, when John is about to fall down and worship the angel who brings him the wonderful tidings, we are distinctly told who that angel was. For John was forbidden to worship him. The angel told him plainly, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book. Worship God."

While we see so much of beauty in the labors of the angel-world, we must not forget how distinctly Jesus gave instructions concerning uneducated spirits ; how he again and again cast out their influence as they were afflicting man. He always taught that they were present, and gave authority and power to cast them out. We often find him in direct contact with them, and it is

perfectly clear that they knew him. All the testimony we have goes to show that they were all disembodied souls who had once inhabited this earth. This is clearly deduced from Christianity as taught by its great author.

When Christ was in the synagogue at Capernaum on the sabbath (Luke iv. 33-35), there came a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried aloud, "Let us alone: what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, — the holy one of God." And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him;" and, when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not. These were evidently the spirits of unenlightened souls, who found rest in this man's nature, where they could retain supremacy. In no other way can such phenomena be explained. These two classes of spirits — the good and the evil, or the enlightened and the ignorant — are clearly recognized by our Saviour. Both they and we are directly under his supervision, and must come to the Father through his generous teaching; for he only is the authorized and legitimate door.

After this life is extinct, the spirit is as much the child of God, it is as much an object of the compassion of our Lord and of the intelligent labors of exalted souls, as before. The magnitude of the wisdom of Jesus and the eternity of his word are alone able to direct us, and purify us from earthly love. "No man," says Jesus, "cometh unto the Father but by me." The holy angels are on their mission of love. They are breathing into every soul the holy destiny of man, and the ultimate triumph of the immortal soul. Every thing that impedes this destiny is sure to break and crumble down. Evil influences also are striving against that heavenly destiny, and will continue to do so until their own dark spirits shall have been enlightened by the superior intelligence of the truths of Christ.

There is not a beauteous marriage-rite without these hovering guests, striking their harps in sweetest congratulation. In palace gay and brilliant, in cottage low and humble, in the mansion and the hovel, tread these unseen visitors. In and out they go, sweet guests of Paradise, unfelt, unrecognized, and uninvited. The light of that morning is dawning which shall reveal these

dear forms. As the grass springs upon the mounds of graves, so do the bright hopes of memory grow in the shrines of these earthly tenements which once knew and loved them. In the bright reality, the age of superstition vanishes. On the golden vista of the future what scenes are recorded! The problem of the ghosts that once did walk the earth, arousing human credulity and vainly taxing wisdom for a solution, is now plainly solved in the great scroll of time which is being unrolled. Intellect is no longer marvellous. The announcement of things unseen is now fully recognized. In this age of advancement, the principle of the invisible is as readily adopted into the human soul as the existence of light and air. Can we not see in this the triumphant grandeur of the simple teachings of Jesus? The ministrations of his holy angels appeal through the intelligences to the highest emotions of the human soul, telling us to "love one another." Where is the man, however deep in error and vice he might be plunged, who could resist the reformation of his own conduct, were he sure that the pure eyes of some loving father or mother, brother or sister, wife, child, or friend, were con-

stantly looking into his soul, and knowing every act and thought? This is really the situation of every individual on earth. Such is the eternal law, such the absolute fact. Every thought, purpose, and intent of our souls is plainly seen and read by all intelligent angels. Every human soul has extended to it waving palms of affection, encouraging it to go, beckoning it home.

And all *do* hear this low voice stealing
Through our inner deep,
Ocean-waves of thought revealing,
That had seemed to sleep,
Till this angel-chorus, bursting
O'er the sleeping chord,
Wakens all the deep thoughts thirsting
For the voice of God.

This is our unalterable condition. This is the growth of all human souls, through the inner perceptions of our immortal nature. It presses on past every barrier, yearning to establish its relationship with the Almighty Father. It is the high spiritual development of the simple teachings of that Jesus of Nazareth who was so unfeelingly crucified without the gates of Jerusalem.

Let us for a moment examine the traditionary

theories concerning these realities. Among the Jews were many forms of religious observance, of which one, observed both by priests and people with great solemnity, was called the "Great Feast of Expiation." For several days, all good Jews gave alms, and strictly practised charity, in order to prepare themselves for this feast. The priest was required to dwell in the temple apart from his wife and family, that he might be free from worldly anxiety or temptation on the day of the feast. Burnt-offerings were made for the sins of the people; for on that day a ransom was made, and all the sins of the people for that year were taken away. They had purchased their redemption through the blood of the sacrifice. On the day of the feast, a young bullock, selected with great care, and free from spot or blemish, was brought to the temple, and there offered in sacrifice by the priest. Two goats were also selected, of the same color, size, and price, one of which, drawn by lot, was to be offered on the altar with the bullock; while the other was given to the priest. Upon this second goat were solemnly laid all the sins of the people; and then the priest tied upon him a long piece of scarlet, and delivered him to a delegation, who took

him without the city-gates, and threw him, with the sins of the people, down a high embankment. Thus the sins of the Jews were expiated. This old Jewish rite is at the foundation of many of the theories of the Christian Church. This Jesus, whom the Jews crucified without the gates of Jerusalem, is held up before the world as the offering for the sins of the people.

But Jesus taught the Jews and all mankind that God is a spirit, and that they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. He taught that redemption does not consist in burnt-offerings, or sacrifices outwardly made, but that each human heart must lay upon its own inner altar the sacrifice of love toward its fellows. This alone is the sacrifice whose fragrant incense will rise to the throne of God. The so-called Christian Church of the present will be forced to stand back aghast. Pointing to Jesus, she will say to her disciples, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world! He is mightier than I: his shoes even I am not worthy to unloose. He it is that will baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Now, in the name of all that is sacred, what is this baptism? Is the holy Jesus only the repre-

sentative of the Jewish scapegoat? Are his lofty teachings only a repetition of the old Jewish ritual, starving humanity to death? Is there no life in Christianity? Is it a mere dead formula, fit for pleasing worldlings of different creeds? No, no. It is the inbreathing of the fire of God into the souls of all men, quickening in them immortal hopes. It is the vast spiritual sea of truth rolling in upon humanity, and baptizing it into the realities of the inner life. When man shall understand the teachings of Jesus, he will then recognize the triumphs of the inner over the outer man. He will cast out from his soul the old Jewish ritual, and every other ritual which cramps his spiritual life, and will come direct to God himself. Then will this song greet him, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates! and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors! and the King of glory shall come in." Do you imagine that I speak of these things without warrant? Do you think it a fantasy? There is a reality in these vast unexplored fields of spiritual thought; and man must and will know it. But a few centuries ago, good Christian men were *shocked* by the strange idea that human beings existed on the other side of the globe. The good Archbishop of

Mentz was pained to think that such a race might exist beyond reach of the conditions of salvation.* Since then, the students of science have traversed valley, plain, and hill; measured the height of mountains, and traced the courses of rivers; mapped out the fair face of the earth; gathered choicest plants from every clime, and classed them into orders, families, genera, and species. And is there no Humboldt to measure the lofty mountains of spiritual growth, or to trace the flowing rivers on whose banks are growing fruits and flowers precious to man? To do this is the duty of the student of theology; and, if he will not perform it, the truth will surely come to us of its own innate power. It is no

* "In regard to the earth being a round body, Lactantius (Inst. i. iii. 23) in the fourth century says, 'Is it possible that men can be so absurd as to believe that the crops and trees on the other side of the earth hang downwards, and that men there have their feet higher than their heads?'

"St. Augustine (Civ. DXVI. 9), who flourished A. D. 400, treats this opinion on other grounds; and, without denying the globular form of the earth, he asserts that there are no inhabitants on the opposite side, because no such race is recorded by Scripture among the descendants of Adam.

"When Virgil, Bishop of Salisbury, in the eighth century, was reported to Boniface, Archbishop of Mentz, as holding the existence of antipodes, the prelate was shocked at the assumption, as it seemed to him, of a world of human-beings out of the reach of the conditions of salvation; and application was made to Pope Zachary for a censure of the holder of this dangerous doctrine." — *W. Whewell, D.D.*

phantom or delusion, but is as tangible as a proposition in geometry. Underlying all the phenomena of the mind of man is a great spiritual law, little understood, because universally neglected.

All inventions and improvements, whether in art, science, or literature, we regard as originating in ourselves, and universally give to man the praise. This is not correct. Man is in no sense an originator: he is the agent through whom God's laws, in their infinite majesty, are promulgated. Every event in human life comes directly from the laws of Him who shapes the destiny of all things.

In the more recent developments of mental or spiritual power, grouped under the name of *modern spiritualism*, every unprejudiced observer must see that some force is powerfully operating on the mental strata of man's nature. Although the entire subject is most thoroughly and heartily despised by a large number of Christians, although it is bandied about in all directions as contemptible, although every conceivable slur and unkind reproach is heaped upon those who believe in it; yet it marches steadily on, growing constantly in strength, and silently converting all men to its faith. It has unquestionably softened all the forms

of religious doctrine, and subdued their violence. It has enlisted more believers than any other Christian faith. It silently gathers within its fold kings and princes, wisdom and intelligence, wealth and poverty, industry and idleness; men of every rank, and every shade of opinion. And what is its faith? Simply, *that we live again*; that mortals such as we are, possessing and using the same mental powers as ourselves, inhabit that future world; that the event called "death" is only the dropping of this frail shell from the immortal spirit of man as he is ushered into the future world, there to live forever. The phenomena presented in the evidences of what is called modern spiritualism teach the same lessons that are to be found in the lives of Christ and his disciples. So true is this, that the former proves the latter. It demonstrates all the peculiar positions assumed by Christianity. It gives to the world the proof so long needed of the reality of the faith promulgated by Jesus.

Since the days of the early Christians, the most eminent divines have failed to give direct evidence that the teachings of Jesus were practical; and, when called upon for such proofs, they have

appealed to the purity and uprightness of their advocates. There is no better example than that given by Lord Erskine in his great defence of Christianity. When certain booksellers who sold the works of Thomas Paine were prosecuted for selling immoral books, the only evidence of the practical truth of Christianity which the great advocate offered in his important speech was the exalted character and extensive experience of such men as Newton, Boyle, Locke, Hale, and Milton, as opposed to Thomas Paine;* while Paine retorts that good men have always been found among all peoples, and re-affirms his position, that Christianity is contrary to reason and natural law, being made up of the mysticisms of heathen mythology. So, to-day, we may offer the names of all the great and good men before and since Christ: it does not prove our faith. Hindoos and Chinese, Greeks and Romans, as well as Jews, can all present a long list of names of great men fit to serve as patterns of holiness; but, before the great

* Speech of Mr. Erskine, delivered July 24, 1797, before Lord Kenyon and a special jury. Williams, a bookseller of London, had been prosecuted, by the Society for the Suppression of Immorality, for publishing Paine's "Age of Reason."

spiritual principles advanced by the Nazarene, all men and names indiscriminately must shrink and shrivel into utter insignificance. These are the only laws connecting man with God; and they are practically as absolute as the natural laws in conformity with which the earth revolves around the sun. Man differs from animal, vegetal, and mineral life, only as his spiritual nature is allied to God. The spiritual law operates upon the spiritual nature of man as the natural laws of day and night, sunshine and cloud, winds and storm, act upon the earth. The thought that good could come out of Nazareth, or that a prophet could arise in Galilee, was disgusting to the Jews. Nevertheless the Messiah did come from that despised place, and by his peculiar doctrines did shock their sensitive pride. Single-handed and alone he confronted the ancient religion of Judaism. He taught that all power was from God, and manifested through the spiritual nature of man. The Holy Spirit was accessible alike to all mankind, and would impart wisdom, knowledge, and power to all who asked. Jesus gave his own name as a pledge for the fidelity and truth of this assertion. All this excited the scorn and ridicule of the Jews, and

was disposed of, as they thought, by the violent death of its author.

Are not the spiritualists to-day as much despised by a large portion of our good Christians as were the Nazarenes by the Jews? Are not their doctrines as disgusting as were the teachings of Jesus to the members of the Sanhedrim? And no wonder; for the spiritualists as thoroughly expose the folly and inconsistency of the favorite theories and institutions of men to-day as did Jesus the traditions of the Jewish elders. They will be as successful as he; for the door leading to immortal life was unlocked by him on the borders of the Sea of Galilee: and spiritualism is proving that man is intellectually large enough to fling that door wide open. Open it shall remain forever, until the laws of the spirit become as familiar to man as the laws of Nature.

How shall this be shown? Go back with me to the records of Moses. All the events related by him, as well as the direct communings of the early prophets with God, are clearly traceable in these modern developments called "spiritualism." Nearly the exact counterparts of the events related by Moses are shown by these spirit-mediums of to-day.

Lights like burning flames, letters, and words, are fully depicted, and plainly seen and read; the human voice is distinctly heard in the atmosphere; statements involving high mental culture are given by persons of inferior education; important predictions are made of future events; detailed facts are correctly given by persons knowing nothing of the subjects related; the sick are healed, the lame made to walk, and the blind to see, — all this is done by a power of which the individual knows nothing, and which he is unable to explain. This is called by some clairvoyance, by others magnetism or electricity, by others spirit-power, by others the power of second-sight, by others a trick and imposition, and by others the Devil. These phenomena can be certified by thousands of intelligent witnesses in all parts of the world, by facts that occur in nearly every town and city in this country, by books and publications circulated among all classes of people, and by from five to six millions of persons who are called spiritualists. And — most singular of all — this power is not confined to those who are believers, but is universal among people who observe the laws which appear to control its operations; and it may be as fully tested

in the private family as in public. Whether it be manifested among Americans, English, French, Germans, Chinese, Hindoos, or the natives tribes of our own country or any other, uniformly the same claim is made, and the same authority assumed for it: it is the power of the spirit, and is one of the laws governing all human souls. If this be true, it is useless for us to quarrel about it, or to object to its mission. The subject is as surprising and complete as any offered to the contemplation of man; and, in investigating it, we shall be overwhelmed with the magnificence of the truths brought to light, and their correspondence with the events recorded in the New Testament.

The advocates of spiritualism are no more prepared for its grand ultimates than are its opposers. The Church itself is very far behind the great truths which it attempts to establish. There is a world beyond, which we have not seen. It is thickly set with human souls, all equally interested in the progress of man. All that has been in the past furnishes *hints* only, indicating the mighty under-currents of existence. Among these mediums we see men and women talking of the power of clairvoyance and magnetism. We see and hear

of unpretending persons performing acts of healing by means of some power latent within them ; and we are filled with wonder and amazement. But, as we examine this matter, far greater importance will attach to the operations of this unseen world of spirit upon the concerns of life about us. Every individual makes his own condition, as he yields to the higher or lower influence of thought. Our desires are the primary moving principles of our life, here and hereafter. In every form of life, spirits can and do affect us. They become a part of us as we desire or seek ; and the operation is through our mental faculties. Thus they produce happiness or sorrow, severity and hatred, or gentleness and love ; and thus often they bring to pass sickness or health. All this takes place innocently, but in accordance with the laws of our being. Thus we see the great power and meaning of the brief words of Jesus, " Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." This law of our connection with the future world is absolute and positive ; but it has been so stupidly neglected, that it is hard to comprehend it. When, in passing through the streets, you see a poor struggling mortal picking up chips or bits of paper for his support,

and are moved to assist him tenderly with counsel or money, a thrill of joy is sent through that spirit-world, which will assuredly come back to you in some form of happiness. Or if, moved by pride or selfishness, you strike this poor creature, or push him from the walk, a thrill of anguish is sent through that range of spirit-life ; and it will surely produce a return to your soul of sorrow and hurt. By the laws of our being it must be so ; for all spirit is interlinked. The spirits we call evil are God's innocent agents, working out his laws through all the multiple ranges of human intelligence. All hold different attitudes towards God. In comparison with him all souls are evil. The different gradations in wisdom, virtue, and truth, are not assigned to us by birth, but are attainable only through continued toil and suffering, equally free and open to all.

The attractions and repulsions of our nature towards this vast world of spirit are far more important than is supposed. We become surrounded by the influence which in our hearts we really desire ; and sometimes it overpowers us. If our desires are low and cunning, just that sort of attraction is about us : if they are just and honor-

able, a new attraction repels the other. Like attracts like, and will forever produce the same results. Through this refining process, all must pass. We are reaching the point at which we can behold the operation of these laws; and, as we perceive them, all mystery will vanish, and we shall contemplate with adoring reverence these mighty works of God. Amid all the conflicts of men, these laws are developing, and are showing us the mighty truth of the words of Christ. This power of the human soul seems infinite; for it is the power of the mortal to perceive the secrets of the Spirit. No secret of the human soul can be hid from God, nor from the man whose soul is born of the Spirit; and, when men act up to this principle, all that Jesus promised shall be exemplified in practical life, as it was intended to be. But it is only through intensest suffering that man is born of the Spirit; and, when he has been thus born, he becomes individualized, and able to hold in perfect abeyance all things beneath him. This power of the Spirit is the only authorized credentials ever given to the Christian to prove him Christ's disciple.

These great principles were never left to the

caprice or whim of any sect or party on earth. But every pastor must be he who can feed the hungry flock; and he shall be everywhere self-commissioned, and God alone shall reward him. Ages ago, the sweet prophet Isaiah spoke as he was moved by the Spirit, and said, "Thus saith God, I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than find gold, even a *man* than the golden wedge of Ophir."—(Isa. xiii. 11, 12.) How shall this arrogance and haughtiness be subdued? Often do we hear the solemn injunction, "Be ye reconciled to God!"—not by penance or sacrificial offerings to appease the anger of the Most High; not by punishments inflicted upon the children of men. To be reconciled to God is to be reconciled to one another and to the inevitable laws of life. Surrounded as we are by the conflicting forces of this life, every event which seems to mar our happiness we murmur at rebelliously, not seeing that in these very griefs the mighty power of the Infinite is tenderly nestling us in the arms of safety.

Successful selfishness is the prime standard of value in this world; and for many ages we have

been taught to regard with hostility whatever opposes our selfish success. As early as from A.D. 312 to 320, Constantine marched victoriously into Rome, and established among heathen worshippers what was called the Christian Church. With the high and sacred Christian principles he mingled the selfish ceremonies and customs of heathendom; and thus the purity of Christianity was immersed in selfishness. Ecclesiastical history says of this event, "The revolution under Constantine was one from which almost every thing which the Christian values might be hoped; but, alas! such is the depravity of human nature, it was one in which almost every thing of evangelical worth was lost. Constantine brought the world into the Church, and the Church was paralyzed." "Immense and splendid temples were erected and richly endowed; and a great priesthood was regularly organized and liberally supported. The body existed; but the spirit had fled." Constantine set up an immense national church; but the humility, faith, and spirituality of the age of Polycarp had passed away. What deplorable degeneracy from the simple worship of the apostles! Thus selfishness was the grand motive-power in

the establishment of the Church ; and it has ever since been the grand motive-power in its continuance. Can we wonder that this selfishness should be imitated by those upon whom circumstances bear hard ? Is it strange that our prisons and houses of correction are filled to overflowing ; and that our judges, juries, and constables are overworked in punishing men for selfish misdeeds, while if the same amount of money, time, and talent were spent in instructing them as the law of Christ positively demands, they might be saved and protected ? We are not blind men and women, void of understanding, but intelligent children of God. Then why not look intelligently into the causes that are operating upon us, knowing as we do that the laws of God are unalterable through all changing time ? Look at the history of Rome and Carthage. What happened to them will from the same causes befall us. Worldly wealth and proud prosperity, with its indolent and fictitious life, are as poor educators for us as them. The vices of self-interest will as surely undermine all real strength ; and unless intelligent manhood protect itself by true Christian instruction, and call to its aid the only real power at

its service, invoking its spiritual relations to the future world, as Jesus did when selfish temptations were proffered to him,—unless this is done, we must pass through the same ordeal as Rome and Carthage. If we neglect this duty, we may be sure the laws of God will overtake us, and barbarians worse than Vandals will be upon us. The Gothic trumpet may not indeed ring at midnight in our streets unanswered; but political infidelity, lack of integrity in places of trust, the utter selfishness of civil leaders and religious teachers, may be more deadly to us than a host of barbarians. The laws of God—as expounded to us by Jesus Christ, the only authorized ambassador—are not matters to be speculated upon and quarrelled over by delegated agents. They are stern realities of everyday life. There is no counting of beads, there are no penances, no outward offerings, no certificates, but an unreserved submission of each heart to works of goodness and humane charity. Then arrogance shall cease, and haughtiness be laid low; then man will be more precious than fine gold,—even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. But the Christian Church, in its synods and councils, determines by vote all important questions of dis-

cipline and doctrine, forgetting that the Spirit is not of this world, but forever at variance with it.

During the past year (1867), the great Church of St. Peter's, at Rome,—the legitimate mother of all our churches,—on the occasion of the eighteen hundredth anniversary in honor of its tutelary apostle made a grand exhibition, surpassing in costly magnificence every other religious ceremony on the earth. At that time, several distinguished worthies of the past were canonized and made saints. By these worldly conventions, synods, and councils, these irresponsible bodies of men, every preacher of the gospel throughout the world is commanded what to preach as pure Christianity. Is not this the same bargain as that which Satan offered our divine Master, and which, then so thoroughly exposed and rejected, is now eagerly accepted by his unworthy church? These artifices of Satan—embodied in the cunning subtlety of public opinion, matured in the luxury of wealth, promulgated as law by ecclesiastical synods, and secured by our devotion to the good opinion of the world—are now, as of old, demoralizing every noble and inspired emotion in man, by compelling him to conform to public prejudices, or give up his

calling. Upon nearly every minister in the church, from Pius IX. down to the youngest student graduating at the divinity school, this law is binding, debasing manhood, and obstructing the freedom of the Spirit, which is the Holy Ghost, and the Comforter promised.

If we would have man free, useful, and able to instruct his fellow-creatures, this mental slavery must be destroyed. We cannot trammel our intelligence without injury to ourselves; for the intellect of man is the grand highway which the Holy Spirit of God will traverse. This immortal spirit of truth is now waiting and knocking at the heart's gate of every one of us; but we cannot hear, because every school of the church, every minister at his altar, is fettered by the rude force of public opinion, made up of the ignorance, superstition, and prejudice inherited from all the past. These traditionary delusions must die, and be buried among the ages mouldering behind us; and man must be invited to walk forth with his religious nature untrammelled, taking counsel of the sciences, and with them kneeling at the shrine of Nature, there to study God. For, with man's spirit unconfined, who can foretell his immortal

destiny? Boundless he roves, with no confines save eternity, no limit this side of Deity.

Geology teaches, that, in the early ages of our earth, rude ferns of enormous growth were its natural productions. Huge reptiles and the giant mastodon were the chief representatives of animal life. Fitted and adapted to that age, their bones lie buried deep in earth, crumbling in the sepulchres of the past. There let them lie! For to-day intellect controls the world. Mind is the governing principle, the source of strength, the God-given power that will subdue all physical obstacles; and in the same ratio as scientific skill in mechanics proves itself superior to strength, so shall man find the mental force of the human soul superior to all physical errors: it will most assuredly subdue them. Then all our courts of justice, with their costly arrangements, our prisons and gibbets, with their implements of distress, shall be buried in the past; and man, with all his errors and frailties, shall be beloved by man as his own immortal brother, made in the image of God, more precious than fine gold, — even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.

How can this be brought about? Can the re-

ligions of the world as they are now constituted do this? Can the Papacy, with its doctrines of immaculate conception, holy orders, and indulgences? can the Protestant Church, with its doctrines of election and depravity, regeneration and atonement, with all its Thirty-nine Articles, do this? They cannot do it; for they are not working according to the law of God. For, like all laws of God, this must be born to man through intensest labor, study, and research, — as in astronomy, chemistry, or geology, as in every mechanical art or every philosophic system. Labor, pain, and suffering are the only producers of great results. These laws of our being appeal to our highest intelligence. They show that results like those foreshadowed by the prophecy of Isaiah must be the inevitable consequences of the highest culture of our spiritual nature, and must belong to every human being, irrespective of earthly theories. Even now, man can intelligently contemplate this thought, showing that he is ready.

Religion is the culture of man's whole nature, producing results honorable to the Creator. The botanist must not, in his researches, put aside the gnarled or scrub oak, the brier, thistle, and

bramble, as sins, and bestow his affection upon the rose and hyacinth, the peach and orange, as righteousness; for he sees in all the infinite wisdom of God, leading him into strange labyrinths of beauty and wonder. So the zoölogist must not set aside the baboon or monkey, the rat or snake, as vice, and exult in the horse or lion, the coney or fawn, as virtue. Neither can theology do so with reference to man; for, in all ages of the world, God's laws are the same,—constant and economical, certain and triumphant. Animal, vegetal, and mineral life are all governed by the same unerring laws. In the lily or hyacinth the little germs of existence begin by law, and go on and on to perfection. First the coarse outer shell or leaf begins to open according to the laws of its life, unfolding each day finer and more delicate petals; each separate grade of petals tenderly guarding its life-centre until the law of its being is fulfilled, and its inmost spirit bursts forth in fragrant incense to its Maker. So the germ within man is guarded by the trying and painful events of life. That germ is godlike, and native within each human soul. Its blossoming fragrance is brought out only by the trying conditions of

life. The deep, secret, silent, longing aspirations of the soul are the petals infolding this immortal germ. Like the dew, rain, and sunshine upon the flowers, the conditions of life open for us these delicate petals. Every trial, every success, every failure, is a force opening the petals which guard this centre of our inner manhood. Every suffering or sorrow through which man is called to pass, every conflict among men or nations, every invention in art, every development in science, every inspiration in literature or philosophy, is one of the successive seasons which are maturing this precious germ, until in full fruition it shall open in fragrant glory to its Maker.

This is clearly the purport of the teachings of Jesus Christ. What he himself distinctly claims, — that he came not to condemn the world, but to save it, — that will he certainly do. He has pointed out to man all the hinderances to his spiritual growth. He has shown us all the diversified qualities of good and bad in our nature, and the laws of recompense. He has shown that through suffering and sorrow our native vicious propensities are subdued, and carefully winnowed out, like chaff from the wheat. And Jesus — the only authorized ambassa-

dor — will present each individual to his Maker, sublimely beautiful, made so through the intensity of this discipline. Could Christopher Columbus have told his people, the day his frail bark left the shore, what this country is to-day? Could Nicholas Copernicus have told in his day the wondrous perfection of astronomy now? Could Robert Fulton have foretold, even in his time, the uses and power we find in steam? Could John Gutenberg or John Faust have predicted the results which were destined to follow the invention of printing? Can the mother, lying in the agonizing pains of birth, foretell the future of her son? Yet man has ever accepted in faith these conditions of life, and has boldly pressed forward in hope, adding knowledge and beauty to the things of earth. And now he is intellectually able to take hold of the great title-deeds of his future possessions. By the cracking of his woodman's axe, he has dared to break the silence of the solemn forests. He has disturbed peaceful brooks and quiet rivers by heavy bursts of steam and rolling paddle-wheels. He has forced the gloomy mountain, standing in silent grandeur, to disgorge its hidden treasures. And now he has dared to break the silence of the skies to bring to

earth the glory of that heavenly realm. Those pearly gates he swings open, and holds converse with his loved ones. They tell him that there they are re-united to humanity, that man is the true republic, and must be Christian in thought and deed. In spite of the hideous things taught by Romanism or Calvinism, there Christ doth summon all the hungry poor: his table is ever spread for the weary, the forsaken, and the outcast. Old frauds and witnesses there come to light; things done in secret are published on the housetops; great names are brought low; hands that were white and clean on earth show there the stains of blood. The spirit searcheth all things, and is a consuming fire. It meets all forms of moral evil, as fire meets fire. And woe to that soul who loves evil more than he loves his God! for the evil in his breast, like a scorpion, will sting itself and die.

And this, you say, is a fancy picture; for no one knows of heaven. Do ye know of earth? The mighty secrets yet undiscovered in Nature's rude forests, the vast treasures that lie within the bosom of ocean and river, the boundless riches hidden within the bowels of the earth, who knows? or who can tell? If we have cut a few trees from

the forests, sailed a few ships and steamers on ocean and river, and exhumed a few treasures from the mountain, does that give us the knowledge of the secrets of this vast earth?

In fact, we know less of earth than of heaven. For to that world of thought and imagination, love and beauty, man is native-born. With it he has always held communion, and he will continue to do so forever. All that is dear and noble in man is akin to that spirit-world. His power is only manifested when his spirit is baptized by that divine spirit. All the power ever shown in forum, parliament, or senate, in the artisan or scholar, on the battle-field or in the workshop, has been shown when the spirit within us has been fired by the Holy Spirit from the altar of God. But the relation which man sustains to the events of this world is so interwoven with the divine, that he overlooks the true state of the case, and nourishes the idea, inherited from traditionary superstition, that eventually some supernatural agency, especially instituted, will usher him into the beauties of Paradise. Theories of this sort have in all times been clothed with all the solemnity of religion and all the beauty

of culture ; but, while such theories may be very beautiful, facts are very real.

Instead of some hoped-for Messiah again to come and enlighten the sons of men, the inner spirit of man himself must come forth. Not until then can man practise the divine instruction brought by Jesus upon the earth. This power within each human soul, when kindled into life by the Spirit, shall move and control all things. The opening of these prison-gates, the lifting-up of these inner doors, will beautify and adorn all the world. For this Jesus was ushered into the world, to this his sufferings and resurrection clearly point, and for this the saints of all ages have been praying.

The breaking-down of all barriers to the free ingress and egress of the Holy Spirit upon the soul of man will be attended by the tottering of all human institutions, the crumbling to ashes of all the laws of men, and the adoption of the divine law as instituted by Jesus. This consummation must come. The monitor within the human soul is true and just to each, as the needle to the pole ; and from this there is no escape. Every person, from the king on his throne to the beggar in the streets, knows that he possesses this inner monitor,

called "conscience," which is forever telling each of his misdeeds and his merits, and holding every human soul to judgment with an iron grasp from which it cannot flee. The politician may think he is deceiving his constituency; the merchant, his customers; the priest, his people; the thief, back-biter, and murderer, their victims; while, in truth, all who desire to deceive are cheating and deceiving themselves alone: for God we cannot cheat; and this inner spirit of man possesses the attributes and powers of the Deity. In every circuit of our social, religious, and political relations, it holds supreme authority, and there is no higher tribunal to which we can appeal. In all ages, the strength of this inner man has been recognized; but its relations to God have never been appreciated. A single illustration will convey my meaning.

Near the banks of the Merrimack River dwells a frail and modest man, whose health would not allow him to engage in physical combat; yet his inward spirit, keenly sensitive to the high principles of honor and justice, created a power against the enemies of these principles, which was more terrible than armies. That man saw inwardly, with intensest interest, every movement of his country's

conflict. He saw a frail old woman catch an imperilled flag of her country, and fling it to the breeze, defying the terrors of an embattled host. Her voice rose above the cannon's roar, telling that maddened army, "Shoot, if you must, this old gray head, but spare your country's flag!" This was the divine power within the breast of Barbara Frietchie, which stopped Stonewall Jackson, and compelled his proud army to tramp with muffled mutterings, like a funeral-train, under that waving flag. This is the divinity within the poet's breast, that caught the fire of patriotism, and flung it into pæans of beauty rolling through human hearts forever.

Shall we in this nineteenth century be as blind to the real events around us as were the people who lived before these centuries began? Shall we, like the Jews, look for the outward coming of a Messiah, when that grand Messiahship has already inaugurated among men all the principles needful for breaking the selfish barriers that restrain the human soul? Every man born of woman possesses within himself god-like attributes, and can under all circumstances hold converse with God. This is man's birthright and prerogative. It was not

obtained by us; neither can we part with it. Through man alone is worked out among men the divine law of God. Heaven is no longer merely an ideal realm, where the robed seraphs stand tuning their immortal lyres, but is within us, is connected with the stern duties of daily life. The cold intellect of man clearly recognizes this great truth. But when the spirit shall breathe upon that lifeless intellect, the foliage of wisdom will spring from its dead branches in blossoms of love, and the world must succumb to the spirit. In every step travelled by us in this journey of life we find Deity manifest. Not one particle, either of mind or matter, but bears its part in this great journey. The smallest atom of matter heaves with the emotions of divinity. This boundless universe, in all its throbbing life, is but the plexus of divine respirations. In this wide existence we necessarily find evil only relative, a gradation from the positive germ of goodness; then let man acknowledge the divine principle according to the soul it shines through. Let us recognize the bounteous hand of God in all the events of life; and let us remember that whatsoever we do to the least of the children of men we do it to the Divine!

There is a presence-chamber deep within each human breast, where the Eternal shall reveal himself. For this, all knowledge, labor, laws, and love, all spirit, converge in one; and this shall renovate the world.

III.

FROM the creation until the present time, man has been travelling onward in pursuit of knowledge and truth. He is to-day the heir to a vast patrimony of knowledge gathered in this immense journey, which is the property of ourselves and our children forever. These vast possessions of the present age are the concentrated results of long and patient industry, and possess an intrinsic value that neither gold nor silver nor precious stones can measure. Even the earliest efforts of man in his rude estate have added to the value of this treasure. The earliest works of the ancients in Persia, Arabia, India, and Egypt, have come to us strangely mingled with legendary myths; yet all traces of improvement among those ancient peoples, as well as among the Greeks and Romans, have come down to us, and make a part of our treasures, because they are the results of actual labor. As lately as the time of the American Revolution, our noble sires knew

nothing of the value of steam or electricity as applied to transportation and the transmission of intelligence. They had not even the simple lucifer-match. The flint, steel, and tinder were then important items in housekeeping. In their absence, the good-man of the house must watch his neighbor's chimney, where the rising smoke would indicate the place for obtaining the means to kindle his fires. Adding up all the advantages which knowledge has produced for us, the savings of time and labor in every item produced, and the multiplied advantages of their use, the rapidity with which knowledge is interchanged, it will seem almost like a daily creation of whatever is useful and ennobling to man. Who does not remember the wonder excited in him in his school-days by the strange rule of geometrical progression? with what astonishing rapidity numbers doubled, and how great the result, especially at the last of the sum, among the big numbers? So it is with us: we are now revolving among the big numbers, and immense must be the results. It is not my intention to make up this grand account, or present the vast inventory of treasures culminating in this age, which constitute

the actual property of mankind; but this synopsis is presented to show how wonderful and perfect are the works of God. Nothing is wasted, every thing is counted, and for every event there is a purpose.

But, when we turn from the material surroundings of man to the interior powers of his nature, grander and more majestic scenes tower before us in the distance. Want unfolds the genius of man: the highest talent earth ever possessed was born of adversity. Pearls and diamonds may lie around the brute creation, all unnoticed, and trodden under foot; but the human intellect will gather and treasure them. Every struggle of a human soul in its warfare for its rightful heritage meets a full response from every other human soul. Did we not at some moment feel the quivering aspen hope within, we could never give birth to that triumphant principle of faith which brings to us silently infinite strength. Hope is the chariot of the human soul, and faith its rolling wheels which bear us heavenward. Can that chariot go heavily climbing up to heaven, never to return again? You may crush man to the lowest point of misery, bind him in the galling chains of slavery, make

him a martyr to sin and folly, and he will release himself through the majestic principle of hope: that invisible power, working upon the intellect of man, is more real and tangible than the outer things of earth. The ship on the ocean, fully equipped in all her beauty like a thing of life, is built of the material things we see and handle. But plunge her beneath the waves, and let her be seen no more forever: the intellect that built that ship can rebuild it more perfect than before; but, if the intellect be destroyed, where can it be obtained? Man is therefore more valuable than earthly things, because of his intellect; because of that power within him which we cannot see, but which is forever reaching out and searching after God. In the rigid economy of God's law, every human being must have a place. There must be need for just each one, — the highest no more than the lowest, the best no more than the meanest. All are God's, and created for a divine end. All must stand in their appointed places, making their portion of the great whole.

In our blindness, we think we do well in punishing men for violating man's laws. We injure and hurt them, and confine them with chains and in

prison, while the immortal spirit within them is surging in anguish, and yearning for God's help and blessing.

In all the outward operations of man, — from the smallest beginnings, and upon the slightest apparent foundations, — he has advanced toward a development of the laws which govern results. In science and art, he has carefully traced out the primal law from cause to effect; and by constant and laborious investigation he is enabled to demonstrate the laws he has discovered. Now, if every thing in creation moves by regular law, why should man stand waiting? Why should not this deep longing of the immortal soul find the cause or governing principle which will lead it to the great fountain of wisdom as certainly as the laws in mechanics or any other science lead to perfection? If God governs all things by law, this can be found. Christianity as delivered to the world by Jesus in its native purity seems to be that principle. It stands out alone by itself, uninjured and uncontaminated by all the conflicts of men and all the changes of time. Free it from the cankering influence of party and of sect, and we have the full principle which claims to lead the soul through all

the devious ways of life, — through sin and shame, virtue and holiness, or death and hell, — and guide it through the gates of wisdom into the broad lands of paradise. Jesus distinctly said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” But the laws of Christianity cannot, in their essential principles, be different from the laws of Nature. Christianity, if true, must bear the same imprint, must exhibit the same unchangeable order, manifest in all the works of God. Law is the source of all power, and the perfection of all principle. The botanist will tell us that among all flowers and fruits, all trees, shrubs, and herbs, there is a law governing production, so uniform and certain, that by a leaf, bud, or flower, he can point out the order to which each one belongs, and tell us its habits. The architect and mechanic will tell us that in the construction of buildings or ships, a law governs in all the elements of strength, proportion, and speed, which, if not observed, will destroy their work beyond the possibility of a doubt. The chemist will tell us that the mysterious changes produced by combinations of substances are controlled by laws so unerring, that the slightest vari-

ation entirely changes the result. The geologist will tell us that the formation of this earth is governed by exact laws, so that he can trace accurately every age through which the earth has passed, and approximately tell us how old it is. The astronomer will tell us that laws govern the whole planetary system, so regular, that he can measure the courses of the stars, and foretell the exact moment when sun, moon, or star will veil its face, and the earth at mid-day be covered with darkness. In all animal life, as well as in the material life of all races of men, the same ordering of law is discovered, exactly adapted to each varied existence. Every item of existence in God's universe bears this imprint of his unerring law. This is his certificate, under seal, attached to all his genuine works. Behind this testimony, no man or sect or party can go: every thing without this seal is counterfeit.

This, then, being the natural law in all the works of God, so far as we have direct knowledge, we naturally infer that similar principles must govern all other works emanating from the same source. There we must look for divine authority, for the laws governing this inner, unseen, majestic

manhood that is in every human being what God is to the universe. Like all the other works of God, the soul — the thinking, moving power; the acting principle which controls us; that which fires us to hatred and anger, or subdues us to gentleness and love; that which is the noblest of God's works, for it is indeed godlike — must have a regular order of law by which it is governed. Do the religions of the Brahmins and Buddhists, the teachings of Confucius or Mohammed, the Catholicism of Rome or Greece, the Church of England, or the churches of America, present any such definite order of law, proving its authority by its ability to detect errors and correct the written law, as astronomy and geology have done? Can the philosophies of Socrates, Plato, or Aristotle, in their theories of the human mind, trace their conclusions unerringly back to causes by regular law, as the student with his microscope can trace every order of animalculæ, placing each individual in its appropriate class, and telling us its peculiarities and habits? Do any of these sects or schools show any regular law by which man can determine that they possess the rightful authority? They do not, and cannot. On the contrary, they present so

great a confusion, that authority through any of them is impossible. The only genuine authority was presented to the world by Jesus Christ, bearing the seal and certificate of harmonious relations to all the other laws of God.

The entire theory propounded by Jesus is consistent with itself. It recognizes the inner or spiritual principle in man. It unfolds the peculiar laws of the soul, in its connection with God as the source of all law, and in its relation to material conditions. Never, in a single instance, did he deviate from the high principles which he had advanced. He claimed for his doctrine the absolute and unconditional submission of all men, and illustrated it by his life, sufferings, and death. From the memorable evening when Nicodemus received from his lips the unheard-of announcement, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven," his course was consistent until the hour of his last-recorded words:—

"Go ye into all the world, preaching my gospel: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak

with new tongues ; they shall take up serpents ; and, if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Through the length and breadth of every proposal Jesus announced, there is one uniform consistency of purpose, one design and plan, harmonious from beginning to end. And his teachings were proved by his disciples, in their application to practical life, to be true and useful as he had promised. He proposed no new law. The spirit, like the animal or vegetable, can be of no use until it is born ; and the law of all birth is through pain and suffering, decay and death. This law is immutable, and applies to the internal germ in every soul. Except we be born again, we cannot see the kingdom of God ; and with this law there are no terms of compromise. There is no release, no refuge, no propitiation, no other regeneration, than by being born again. Without this, no soul can see the kingdom of God ; and this law is in harmony with all the others which man has discovered in the works of God. But, as the animal is more precious than the vegetable, the spirit is more precious than the outer man : the laws are more intense and

severe, the higher the object in the scale of value. Therefore the birth of a spirit must be attended with more persistent resistance, with severer anguish and deeper sorrow, than any thing else known to man, because it is more valuable. There is no way for us to evade this law: come it surely will. Sorrow and distress will be our portion till we conform to its terms, which are the breaking-down of selfishness, and the putting-on the generous garments of love, charity, and sympathy. It is the crushing of our innate selfishness. Our very words of acceptance may be selfish. The inner submission of this stubborn heart of ours is a work which must be executed in the solitary chambers of the soul. Each one must do it for himself. No individual in the universe can bear our sufferings for us: this is the law of birth. Never was there a graver mistake than when it was supposed that the peculiar merit of Jesus consisted in being born for us, in doing our work for us, or in bearing our pains. All who know any thing of the laws of cause and effect know that this could not be. He could only tell us the facts, point out to us the law, and encourage us by his own heroic endurance; showing that man is superior to all the suffering

this world can inflict. And where, on the face of the earth, was there ever suffering so intense, anguish so severe, insult so outrageous, or malice so prolific, as was heaped upon that blessed Being, among the people whom he came to bless, and among whom he promulgated these glorious laws? Peter, John, and Paul, as well as all others who took part in the introduction of these laws of God to the world, were compelled to go alone through the whole range of human suffering in order to pass the spiritual birth, and become fitted for effectual work among men. Thus suffering appears to be the inevitable law of the operation of the spirit upon the human soul in its progress towards that baptism or spiritual birth.

Many Christian believers have relieved themselves of this anguish and suffering by substituting therefor the merits of Christ, when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." But he cannot do our labor. We must all pass the door he opened, or we are thieves and robbers. We must all be born through our own personal suffering. This mistake has been made by ingrafting

heathen ideas upon the Christian law. To-day the Hindoo worshippers, in their ignorance, attribute their salvation and happiness to the miraculous power of their idols: if they can gain the favor of the idol, they are safe. Reverence is a faculty inherent in all men, and is honestly liable to degenerate into idolatry. All mankind feel the need of a Supreme Ruler, upon whose infinite strength they can lean in reverent adoration. If this is done without intelligent knowledge, it matters not what we lay claim to be, we are like the pagan worshippers; for we know not what we worship. But, in the religious ideas of our time, there is an advance from the condition of paganism. Men are better prepared to examine first principles, because knowledge has defined certain fixed rules by which we can determine definite results. Were we to show the poor Esquimaux, who never heard of the telegraph, the simple phenomena of electricity, and do before his eyes what our very children can do, he would either worship us as a god, or fear us as a devil. The more you convince him of the positive facts in regard to the telegraph, the more will he be confirmed in his belief of your miraculous mission, and strive to guard himself against your super-

natural powers. This is true of all classes and races of men who have not the knowledge to trace results through principles to causes ; but, when the intellect is duly cultivated, the religious element becomes most powerfully operative for man's happiness and safety. It will surely carry him directly to the original cause, and unite him inseparably with the Supreme Ruler of all things ; for God is the fountain of all law and wisdom, and we are his legitimate offspring.

The ground whereon have grown the seeds of religious strife and party sects, as prolific with Anti-Christ as Heathendom is with idolatry, is now frozen ground : no grain can grow thereon forever. The branches of the tree of sectarian fellowship are withered and dead ; no flowers of promise can bud thereon forever ; but the vine full of life and vigor, carrying its vital currents into every branch, quickening and invigorating every human soul, is the spirit contained in the words spoken on earth by Jesus Christ. When men can so far abandon old pagan rites and ceremonies, can throw aside the traditionary superstitions of the past, and look upon these outward forms as of the earth, and subject to its laws, regarding the soul as the only

living reality, eternal, god-like, and subject only to the law of the Spirit, then shall we comprehend and apply the lessons of Jesus, then will his teachings become plain and practical, making every man a law unto himself. With this view, the Christian faith is too formidable an antagonist for party or sect to grapple with. It is no emblem or showy ornament to please or gratify the pride of man, but a reality grand in its divinity, and simple as a child in its purity, and obedience to law. No grander saying is on record than that of Christ to Nicodemus in reference to the birth of a soul, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If this be a true law, you can no more alter its terms than the geologist can alter his laws, or the electrician the laws of electricity, or the engineer the law of the expansion of steam. Nicodemus was of the rulers in Israel, proud of his nation, and satisfied that the Jews possessed more wisdom than all the world besides. Well he might be ; for, during their long sojourn in Egypt, their doctors and priests, the rabbins, believed they were the authorized owners of all knowledge and wisdom intended by the Almighty for man ; and at this time the wisdom of all the

world seemed to culminate from all parts into the schools of Plato and Aristotle, making one centre of wisdom. But the Jews, in their self-conceit, placed themselves above all the rest of the world, and believed that whatever stray wisdom might emanate from Socrates or Plato was stolen from them while in their bondage in Egypt. Now, Nicodemus was one of the wise Jewish fathers, a member of the Sanhedrim, puffed up with all this Jewish pride. In the evening, this man made a descent upon the young prophet in order to observe for himself what might be the doctrines so boldly promulgated; and there alone are we introduced to them. Nicodemus was undoubtedly satisfied that Jesus was a true Jew: then began the questioning. The simple announcement made by Jesus, without the usual flourishes of learning, confounded him, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." To Nicodemus, this simple proposition appeared an impossibility; for he asks, "How can a man be born again when he is old?" Jesus says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This simple law of the Spirit propounded to Nicodemus that night at his own solicitation

is, beyond question, the fundamental law of the human soul. It can no more be done away with than the law that night will follow day, or winter succeed summer. If this be the law, then surely every proposition made by Jesus as law must bear the same relation, every law set forth by him will bear the seal and test-mark of fixed and absolute law for the human soul, as the natural laws bear to the material universe, — not because he said it, but because he knew the law, and was sent to proclaim it unto man, and by the law of his mission was obliged to give utterance to it.

If the teachings of Jesus are the embodiment of law in relation to the human soul, all truth must be in harmony with it, and all that is not truth must die. The inspirations of the scholar, the artist, the mechanic, the merchant or manufacturer, the farmer or the seaman, in their truest successes, are all in conformity to this truth which Christ developed. Although his language was simple, it involved the highest principles of the spirit in its relations, on the one hand, to God, and, on the other, to the material things surrounding us. The infinite laws of Jehovah govern all things; and this fact Jesus distinctly proclaimed. The

same unerring laws govern matter and mind, and hold all events subject thereto, now as when Moses dwelt in Egypt or sojourned on Mount Sinai. The ant or bee, the otter or bird, all animal or vegetable life, moves by the same law which called it into existence. Then can it be that the spirit of man — the highest type of divinity on earth — is subject to no law? Believe it not, but rather that Jesus did present the only true laws that govern the spirit.

In considering such subjects as this, we must not forget the wonderful advantages we have over past ages, — the concentrated knowledge piled up in printed books, scattered over the world by public schools and libraries, the encouragement given to instruction, the liberty granted to thought and its expression. These vast privileges give to our age a power and authority never before known since the creation. The knowledge possessed by the learned is put within reach of the children of the laboring man; and even the general outlines of any special subject can be obtained in a few hours. Learned men do not now hold the authority which was conceded to them in the past, — not because learning is of less, but rather because it is of more value;

because any individual man, whether king, *savant*, or saint, is neither more nor less than any other man may become; and that great arbitrator — the voice of the people — is obtaining its legitimate rights, compelling king, scholar, and saint to take their seats modestly at the table of our common Father.

Many wrongs have been committed through uncorrected self-sanctity and unbridled religious zeal; but the most stupendous wrong in the whole catalogue of the crimes wrought by religious bigotry is the grossly material interpretation, which, in spite of science and common sense, it has given to all spiritual truth. It is this which has converted the goodness and holiness in the human soul into tantalizing hate. What mother, looking with tender love upon her sweet babe, — the image to her of all that is noble and beautiful, — and instructed by priestly authority that her darling is subject to eternal punishment, its precious head doomed to serve as a pavement for the feet of Satan, can look with any complacency upon such an interpretation of God's love toward the children of men? With such gross and abominable renderings of divine and spiritual truths, we cannot wonder that the cruel

ideas of blind, idol-worshipping pagans, should have become blended in our religion, and should have transformed our Father in heaven — the great fountain and source of all law and love — into the dispenser of all the terrors and distresses of the barbarian's idol-god. Even in the present state of knowledge, these ideas color the greater portion of Christian theological teaching; for there are no laws given either by party or sect by which either Pagan or Christian theories can be tested on the same unerring principles appealed to in other sciences. Were I trained a teacher of theology, instead of a merchant and manufacturer, and should the same contradictory, unsettled facts cluster about my business as around the declared prerogatives of the preacher of Christ's gospel, I would stop at once, and go to work unceasingly to discover whether my belief was justified by facts, or not. I would know whether the noble work I had undertaken was of God, or not; for, if it is of God, it will surely bear his image and superscription. He will demand workmen worthy of their calling. The day for heathen superstitions and trembling fear is past among religious teachers as well as among mechanics, merchants, and traders. Men look for facts,

not for phantoms. In all the positions of life there is a demand for the exercise of true manhood. Never has there been a time in the world's history when every profession, trade, or calling required the exercise of so much manhood as now. Never has there been a time when the real man was so much at his wits' ends to control the events around him. This is true in every department of life, down to the beggar, courtesan, and robber. In this hour of trial, I sympathize fully with the clergy. Their task is a hard one; their profession is peculiarly severe and trying. They have chosen a noble calling; and, although there are thieves and robbers among them, there are doubtless no more in their profession than in every other. There are many village preachers, far removed from town,

“More bent to raise the wretched than to rise;
Whose house is known to all the vagrant train,
Who chides their wanderings, but relieves their pain.
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claims kindred there, and has his claim allowed.”

The difficulty with teachers of theology is, that they have studied their science by the dim lights of tradition, with a reverence overshadowed with the dark mantle of superstition. This, which

would be unsafe in any other science, cannot be safe in theology. Every science requires a sound and sure foundation for faith, sustained by absolute laws. Without this, no science can succeed, and no man can rest satisfied. Christianity, as proclaimed by Jesus, presents this sound and sure position, unaltered and unalterable by any theories of men; but it is really as objectionable and offensive to the world to-day as of old. Every proposition contained in it must be as true to law, and as sure in its effects, as are the operations of the earth in its course around the sun. This, then, being either true or not true, we must search for the proofs.

But should I offer proof from the Christian gospel alone, such as we have a right to offer, and such as, in justice, ought to suffice to establish this proposition, it would not avail; for that gospel we have already in every form, and we have sent missionaries to every quarter of the habitable globe to promulgate its truths. Yet not one of its strict commands is obeyed, and consequently not one of its promises is fulfilled. Its terms are not heeded, its provisions not regarded, its conditions not complied with; which shows that it is

not really believed, and that proof afforded by it alone would not answer. It is placed in our pulpits as an ornament, and used as a text-book for preachers and scholars to try their skill in defending worldly frailties, and truckling to wealth and power; but should I attempt to show that the Gospels prove the Christian law to be, like all natural laws of science, equally unerring and infallible, the argument would be rejected. I must take, therefore, other proof; and I would ask for it careful attention and critical consideration.

All agree that God is a spirit; and most will at once admit that the finer elements of thought and reflection in man, the power called the soul, which moves and controls us, must also be spirit.* There must, therefore, unquestionably exist an affinity or connection between these two, through which a purely spiritual element, such as thought or any mental impression, may naturally flow from one to the other. And the obvious inference is, that through all ages of the world, and among all races of men, an intercourse with God must ever

* "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

be carried on by means of this agency, of course in as many different forms as there are tribes of men, and stages of civilization. Then, should we find from historic records that through all known ages this intercourse has existed, and has been accepted and honored as such by all mankind, the conclusion must follow that this is the law of the Spirit, and the eternal law of God. Now, this is an established fact. Every educated man knows that all races of men, in all ages, have received their inspired truths from God ; that they have their Bibles, or holy records, showing this absolute fact ; and that they regard them as the sacred depositories of truth flowing from the great Fountain-head, or Spirit, which they, as well as we, call God.

This fact being admitted, that the internal principle in man, called the soul, is spirit, holding affinity and connection with God, the great fountain of spirit, it follows, that when the covering of the soul, the external body, decays and dies, it must naturally mingle with its native element, earth ; and the spirit, thus freed, must as naturally rise into its native element of spirit, as an inhabitant of the spiritual realm. Thus every human being that ever existed will be an individ-

ual member of that spiritual kingdom, subject to the same law which called it into being. This principle being unalterably established, it follows that every proposition purporting to be of the spirit will harmonize with this law; and each development of the spirit will present still higher beauties proving the perfection of the law, while every proposition that cannot bear this test will be proven to be counterfeit.

Consequently, in exact conformity to the terms of this law, Jesus Christ, that divine commissioner from the spirit-world, must be presented to man. He is announced officially by an angelic band inhabiting the realm of spirit from which he claims to emanate. His mission is heralded by proclamations of peace on earth, and good will to all men, by the citizens of the country from which he came. The terms of this announcement must have been strictly in harmony with the fountain of all spirit; for all spirit must conform to the law from which it emanates. Therefore, material wealth, position, or honor, can be of no value when cast into the balance with a human soul, because whatever of grandeur this earth can bestow is as fleeting as the changing seasons, and,

like the body, must decay and die. But the spirit, being eternal and enduring, will subdue all matter to the will of God. All material interests must submit to that will from which all laws justly emanate, and to which all things necessarily tend. Therefore, peace on earth and good will must follow.

Since, then, the teachings of Jesus harmoniously conform to these clear terms of law, Christianity is positively the true and lawful representative of the Spirit, and every material element must submit to its terms. The teachings confirm the law: law, teachings, and results are alike in harmony with each other. And this is in strict confirmation of the known laws of every science yet discovered. Men, therefore, need not be in doubt. When weighed in this balance, it will be shown which of the speculations of all men are genuine, and which are counterfeit. This is the proof of the authority and power of Christianity. Its terms are familiar, and can easily be tested by all. Like a problem in arithmetic, it can be proved by starting from any point. Every human being will be compelled to submit unconditionally to its terms; for they comprise the whole law of the spirit. The conditions

are plainly set forth; and there is no way devised by which any man can escape, not even in all eternity. It stands forever an uncompromising law. If we believe, and are immersed in the fires of humble submission, we shall partake of its power and advantages; but, if we refuse or neglect its advantages, we shall suffer the damning consequences. It is like the terms of the architect, when he tells us, "Build your house in conformity to the laws of strength, and you may enjoy its comforts; but neglect the terms of law, and your house will tumble down over your head." There is no "may-be," no "possibly:" the terms are, "You must" and "You shall." Christianity makes no uncertain proposals to man. The teachings of Jesus are clear, direct, and positive: "He that loveth his life shall lose it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be. Ye are my friends if ye do whatever I command you. John viii. 47: He that is of God heareth God's words. John x. 1: He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. John vii. 16: My doctrine is not mine,

but His that sent me. Ver. 17: If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

These are some of the terms set forth by the Author of Christianity as the law for all the world. It was as impossible for him to offer any other as it is for the teacher or pupil in any science to alter its laws. All that the student can do is to come up to the law: he cannot change it. We may try all the schemes we please: the law is still superior to our attempts. When an inventor, having discovered some new and useful improvement in art, secures his patent, all the flood-gates of brain and talent are opened to try and evade it. If he is true, and claims no more than belongs to him, it cannot be infringed: we are compelled to pay tribute to the rightful owner. And similarly situated is this sublime principle of the development of man's spiritual relations. The scholar may pour out all the refined wrath he chooses; the partisan may hurl invectives to his heart's content; all mankind may heap upon it whatever scorn and ridicule they please: we must all, none the less, yield to its claims, and pay our royalty. It is the law of the spirit, and must be complied with.

Thus we come to the main question, What is this law? It is summed up in this: "*Love one another.*" Among all the important doctrines advanced by our Saviour, amid all his exalted teachings for the benefit of man, each separate proposition, whether miracle, command, or parable, forms a perfect joint, interlinking with this, making one complete system, a grand model of consistency.

To love one another would appear to be simple enough. But the precept contains more than we are wont to imagine. No people, with this as its acknowledged law, has any right to be called Christian so long as a convict is within its prisons, a beggar within its borders, or anger and revenge fester in the heart of the community. This law will either relieve them, or take away their title to that name. These few words, "Love one another," compose a law so formidable, that, in the present state of society, a faithful submission to its terms by all people would be like two worlds striking together. It would certainly destroy all the law — and possibly all the gospel — we have, and pitch into utter confusion every organization and institution among men except those of pure charity and love. And still, as every Chris-

tian knows, there stands the fundamental law in all its formidable proportions. It certainly will not yield to man; and, if man does not yield to it, what will follow? The astronomer who should refuse to act upon the fundamental law upon which his calculations are made could give no correct information: he would be entirely untrustworthy, and a disgrace to his profession. Can this apply with less force to theology than to astronomy? Laws are terribly real. If, therefore, Jesus taught the true law of the spirit, and gave to the world this law as the bond of intellectual connection between God and man, it is a science that surpasses all other sciences; for other sciences must be only auxiliary to this. Jesus proclaims in the simplest words, "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father." And again, most pointedly he says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." There is no school of theology, I believe, which pretends to act upon this proposal, or which admits its practicability. How, then, can they give Christ's truth to the world? As well might the astronomer

claim to give correct results while denying the revolution of the earth around the sun. Evidently Jesus did not preach merely to the devotional parts of man's nature; for the law of the spiritual intercourse between God and man covers all the concerns of men: it is as true and effective in science, art, trade, commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, in invention, discovery, literature, and the drama, as it is in our religion, or else it is not true at all. Let us examine the simple but powerful words of Christ himself. He says, —

“No man can serve two masters; for either will he hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other: ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on: is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall

find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

“Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ?

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him !”

Is there one man among us all who really acts up to these promises, and applies them to practical life ? If we do not, what is the matter ? They are clear, and easy to be understood. There can be no doubt as to what the words mean ; for they mean what they say. Have we taken the first step in the obligation ? have we in a single instance conformed to the terms ? How, then, can the results follow ? Law is absolute, stringent, and searching ; and this law, if it is what it purports to be, must be more severe than any other known to man, because it belongs to a class of laws much higher in their uses, just as the law governing flowers and fruits is higher and purer than the law governing the soil in which they grow.

Man as he stands to-day is deeply involved in the earthly laws of his natural being. We are wedded to our idols ; and the separation from that love will be like separating the joints in the body, or the marrow from the bone. Do we not love father or mother, brother or sister, wife or child, more than the high teachings of the Spirit ? Do we not love wealth and honors more than this ? Do we not love society, the church, and our professions, more than this ? All these affections have a natural hold upon us. The disease has become chronic among mankind. How, then, can man accept the exalted truths of the spiritual law promulgated by Jesus ? That this was his mission is abundantly demonstrated by his own words.

Jesus says, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not ; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him : *the word* that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself ; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what

I should say and what I should speak. And *I know* that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

If this authority be admitted among men as testimony (and, in the absence of any rebutting testimony, man is obliged to take it as such), it will prove that the words of Jesus spoken in his earth-life are the absolute laws of God concerning the internal or spiritual nature of man in its relations to the Supreme Father. It must surely follow, then, that when these divine laws of the Spirit are accepted and developed among men, although of much higher character than any other laws, they will show the same conformity with the great design seen in all the works of God. Christ's mighty promises will be absolutely fulfilled in each particular, as much as the promise held out by the buds of springtime is fulfilled in the fruits and flowers of summer. It is through no defect in the law that we do not enjoy its privileges. If, through ignorance and selfishness, we are remiss in accepting its terms, it does not alter the terms.

This earth revolved upon its axis, and pursued its course around the sun, in harmony with the

other revolving planets, long before Copernicus and Galileo attacked the system of Aristotle. The great law existed thousands of years before the facts became known to man. It was no less true when the children of Israel passed out of Egypt than when poor Galileo was condemned by an ignorant priesthood for asserting its truth. All the great struggles in the development of natural science prove only the more conclusively the true relation which this law of the spirit bears to all the works of God. It is subject to the same struggles with ignorance which all others have sustained. Every man who arrives at any intellectual result is inspired, and assists in the final development of every truth.

Man is the great gem of the world, badly as we use him, severely as we condemn him, strange and trying as are his devious ways. He is the chief object of Infinite care. He contains within himself the mighty germ which all laws and all principles are developing. Though the foot of every other man stand upon him, pushing him into the slough of unmitigated contempt, yet his spirit shall raise him up triumphantly, linked to us with the strongest bonds of sympathy; because he is our kith and

kin, and has performed his necessary work in the development of God's law.

Mechanics have discovered that by division of labor greater results are accomplished, more is produced in a given time; and this is the prominent idea in political economy. Division of labor increases wealth. Shall we not suppose that the great Architect of the universe has instituted this rule of economy in his own works, and is thus working out the mighty ends of creation through the multiplied labors of every item, both of mind and of matter? Then all the strange sufferings of human life, all the vicissitudes of fortune, all temptations to sin and error, all conflicts with virtue and holiness, are but the operations of this divine principle of economy; and their end is harmony and usefulness. For the direction which produces the greatest results must be the course pursued. God doeth all things well. Even in a religious point of view, then, it must be right that man should go forth in all these worldly desires and aspirations; for it brings out his power to invent, contrive, and plan. For to understand the spirit of man, and the law of its connection with God and the world to come, all this material world must be

explored and well defined. For that spiritual kingdom must necessarily be a continuation of this material kingdom, inhabited by those, who, like us, have lived on earth, and have shared our loves and hopes and fears. That spirit-world beyond is the beloved homestead of our race,—the treasured home amid whose vast forests, vales, and plains, man shall dwell forever, and the central attraction thereof is our heavenly Father, the holiest and best beloved of all.

All this vast world of spirit, with its infinitude of power, can never be seen by us at a glance. It is definable only as we advance in knowledge and experience. The poet has his worlds of beauty, which the cold philosopher cannot see. Let the poet and mechanic travel over the Old World, and examine all its treasured beauties of antiquity and art: the poet would bring away descriptions of one world; the mechanic, of another. They cannot see alike, because their vision is guided by just that wisdom which their own experience has kindled in their souls. So this vast spirit-intelligence surrounding us is our world to learn; and it will require the united intellect of all mankind to define its boundaries, and estimate its

treasures. As the sun stands in the midst of space, controlling all the revolving planets by its attraction, so this mighty intellect of God stands central to us, holding by his Holy Spirit all these vast ranges of mental power subject to himself. Every human soul feels this attractive force, for it is all about us ; and just as fast as we can intelligently garner in its treasures, will they fall upon us, inspiring each human soul to perform just that part of the great work for which it is best fitted.

Spirits will not bring to us truth ; but they call us up to see where truth lies. There are no truths which God has not already placed around us. Angels have no more glories than mortal men : only knowledge has led them to the gardens of Paradise, where perennial blossoms are growing ; and they see that every barren, sorrowing soul shall deck itself with these fragrant flowers. No human soul could wear a flower of beauty upon its breast if there were not a flower blooming for that soul dyed in the deepest sin ; for God, who hath numbered all the souls in the universe, hath counted also the flowers.

This might be the poetical way of describing man's glorious future ; while, to approach the

subject more practically, we may say, that when man once becomes thoroughly convinced that the soul is a greater reality than the body, when he finds that all there is of a man is spirit, and that the body containing him is of no value when the real man leaves it, then he will see that the soul can enjoy only what it earns by its own experience; for any thing more it could not appreciate. Then, when the soul is moulded into the beautiful form for which it is designed by the law of its own experience, it shall see greatness only in deepest humility, grand results flowing only from noble and generous desires. Submission to the law of love toward one another is the great mallet and chisel which moulds each soul to its place. Without this experience, the crow that feeds on carrion might as well clothe itself in the plumage of the bird of paradise as a soul take its place in the great temple of God without the fitting and forming that shall make it conform to the head stone of the corner. This part of the subject becomes so vast, that all one man can do is to do his best to make it clear, and rest his hopes of success in the thought of stimulating other minds to inquire and reason for themselves.

The great diversity of Christian sects and parties, and of the terms and expressions peculiar to each, would remind the student of ancient history of the times when the logic of Aristotle was popular, and men reasoned sophistically from premises presumed to be true. "There were endless quarrels and disputes about 'occult qualities' and 'imaginary essences;' and the world was full of talk about *intention* and *remission*, *proportion* and *degree*, *infinity*, *formality*, *quiddity*, *individuality*, and all manner of similar abstractions. So violent grew the disputes over these questions, that Pope Innocent III. was led to prohibit the use of Aristotle's metaphysics; but all to no purpose. Even the Vatican was powerless: the people by long custom would adhere to their favorite theories. But in 1620 Lord Bacon's new method of studying the sciences appeared, in which he pointed out the way in which we should carry on the pursuit of knowledge in order to arrive at truth.* His clear, calm reasoning did what the terrors of the Vatican could not do." This age has the same obstacles to contend

* "The Novum Organum" replaces the scholastic logic of Aristotle by a true and solid principle of investigating Nature.

with. The great variety of Christian sects forms as great a hinderance to truth as at any previous time. Every pure Christian injunction as to the reality of the future world as a home for man is clouded by disputes upon the abstract question as to what constitutes a valid title. The different religious denominations present such diversified schedules of what shall be considered the proper certificate, that the whole matter becomes doubtful. Even after setting aside the minor questions at issue between different Christian sects, and examining the subject upon the broad ground at present adopted by all Christians alike, we find them all agreeing that all pagan nations, and all infidels who reject the Christian faith presented by them, have no part or lot in that glorious future. Then the Catholic wing of the Christian Church has decided that Protestants have no inheritance there; while the Protestants have most definitely settled the point that the adherents of the Papacy have no interest whatever in that future world. Thus all are excluded from heaven, and this by an absolute vote.

Such is, to-day, the state of the Christian world, with the exception of a few liberal-minded persons,

who are generally pronounced "not evangelical;" while, on the other hand, the instruction given to the world by the Nazarene was of the broadest liberality, especially when we consider the circumstances amid which he was ushered into the world. The Roman empire, then in its greatest glory, ruled the whole world, which was sunk in the most deplorable superstition, with pagan rites and ceremonies everywhere triumphant, except among the Jewish nation. And even the Jews were divided into strange sects with clashing opinions. They were the Pharisee with his formality and hypocrisy, the monkish austerity of the Essenes, the free-thinking Sadducees; but particularly that demure race of hypocrites, the Pharisees, who ruled the common people completely, and had their votes for every civil and religious office. In such an age, and among such a people, did Jesus promulgate his generous doctrines, which, even in our day, are so little comprehended, that they are supposed to be confined to the dogmatic theories of partisan sects.

All the propositions advanced by Jesus must be either true and practical, or false and worthless. Upon all other known questions we possess the

means of discovering truth or falsity. Even in numerical questions, we can discover unknown quantities by the relation they bear to the known ; and why should not man have the same privilege in questions upon the correct solution of which his highest hopes are founded ? Is it not time that mere hypothesis should give place to reason, and man be allowed to examine the doctrines upon which it is claimed his salvation depends, by the clear light of Christian truth put into the scale of experience, deciding by reason and common sense, as he would upon any other matter ?

By its natural love to man, and generosity towards human suffering, the religion of Jesus triumphs over every human soul. Its applicability to the needs of man in every condition of life is so broad and comprehensive, that it must subvert every other religion. The life, character, and teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, cannot, therefore, belong to any sect or party, but must be the common property of the whole world. They are broad as the universe, and measureless as eternity ; like the advent of some vast comet, appearing in the horizon, rushing to the zenith,

filling the world with glory, departing beyond our sight, leaving us to admire and wonder.

But, high and exalted as they are, they bear no comparison with his own personal experience with death, proving as it does our individual immortality. Rising from the sealed tomb, solitary and alone, unaided by any human effort, this sublime personage re-appears to his friends a living reality with all the mental qualities of his former manhood, showing himself to them in all the varieties of manner which they desire, and proving, beyond the scepticism of the most doubtful, that it is he himself. This single fact sweeps all conflicting opinions of men, all mystical theories or metaphysical reasonings of sects, into the catacombs of the past, there to rest forever. For this act introduces man to his rightful heritage. It opens the mighty doors of the intellectual sanctuary of the human soul, and there shows to man the presence-chamber of Jehovah. It institutes on earth the sovereignty of the soul or inner man, proving the superiority of mind over matter. The law of Christ's mission stands unrevoked. This risen Saviour of the world still stands in all, the majestic power of his mission the true

representative of the spirit in this world. By his resurrection he proves, beyond the power of human reason to controvert, the reality of that spiritual world as one vast commonwealth of human souls like ourselves. This being fairly and absolutely proven, it follows that all souls that ever lived are dwellers there; and of course all the attractions of which human nature is possessed must be concentrated there, exerting a powerful influence over all the concerns of men, and subject, like us, to the laws of progress.

The more the Christian believer denies these fundamental doctrines of his divine Master, the worse it is for him. The more he believes, the better will he be satisfied of their reality, and the more decisively will this prove each human soul to be an organized spiritual individuality, and a legitimate heir to that spiritual kingdom. This vast truth seems to fill the mind of Jesus as he rehearses (Matt. xxiii.) to those stubborn Jews the long list of their short-comings and abominable practices, when he says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen

gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Thus, it may be, Jesus prefigured to the world the great fact, that, in a few years at the most, all these very men, these staid and stubborn hypocrites, who so bitterly and violently opposed his benevolent teachings, should meet him face to face, and there behold for themselves the reality of the truths which he had proclaimed; saying in overwhelming gratitude, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

For all truths have been revealed to man only through the exercise of our utmost power of intellect to discover the hidden secrets of their utility. The entire vegetable and animal creation came to him clothed in deepest mystery for him to divest. Even now, all their vast use and advantage is still far from developed: the seal of their perfection is not yet touched by our intelligence. The mineral kingdom also, with its vast wealth still locked in its hidden recesses, waiting for the intellect to break its seal; the silent wandering of the

heavenly bodies also, moving to and fro in mysterious paths for the intellect to discover their true order; even the uses of industry and the dignity of labor, — are, in their whole extent, unknown. Every truth discovered by man has come to him carefully sealed. Each seal broken by man in his intellectual search after truth, and the discovery of the hidden law which unseals it, is a magnificent creation in every human heart, measured only by the Infinite. Can any intelligent man, therefore, suppose that this mightiest of all secrets, the hidden fountain of all intellectual power and wisdom, is less carefully sealed and guarded? We shall most surely find that the difficulty of discovering the truth will correspond to its value when discovered.

And thus, it may be, the reality and power of that vast world of spirit — which has ever held controlling influence over all this world — is at last dawning upon the intelligence of man. And, as we learn of the hidden treasure it contains, it may reveal to us, that, through its triumphant law, every crooked path shall be made straight, and the words of Jesus understood; so that all men shall say, “Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!”

In all ages of the world, in Egypt and Arabia as well as among the children of Israel, has this power of the spirit been manifest through personal experiences as well as through the higher mental inspirations. This it is which in every age has fired human souls to highest deeds of glory, and highest works of art, literature, and science. It is this that thrilled the soul of Columbus, and urged him on his voyage, stirring up the old dull thoughts of men to a new creation by his discovery. It is this which filled the soul of Luther as he hurled his protest against the walls of the Papacy; and this which drove the band of Puritan pilgrims to these inhospitable shores. It was the bugle-blast from that land of souls which marshalled into line of battle the hardy sons of this New World, and sent echoes of liberty vibrating through the palaces of kings.

This law and this power holds the mighty balance of love and justice between man and man. What but this power wrote on the thickened clouds of our Southern sky, "Weighed in the balance, and found wanting"? And what but this infinite power writes on the maddened brain and unsubdued passion of every man and every nation, in letters

of burning fire, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"?

The vast power of this spirit-world, forever conversant with all human concerns, and acting in harmony with the great laws of existence, will bring all men, through love and affection, to the throne of God, there to worship unceasingly all his works. Through this unfailing and unending intelligence within every human soul, we shall learn to appreciate the wisdom, goodness, and power of infinite law. And thus every race and people that ever has been or ever shall be will be captivated, and led joyfully to the living temple, which is the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb.

CONCLUSION.

THE experience of man through all ages establishes the fact, that, both in nature and art, perfection is not attained in the beginning; but all things are brought through a regular succession of gradations, which in nature we call growth, and in art improvement, until they reach the height of glory. Matter and mind are alike progressive. Error cannot hold the universe of mind more than the universe of matter. Both alike reach their highest perfection through the same primal laws.

Whosoever would succeed in art must learn its secrets. He who walks profitably with Nature must learn her ways. He who would sail on the stream of human existence must stem its contra tide. He who walks with God meets throngs of humanity whose faces are turned away from beauty. They who gather flowers find thorns growing thick around them. We rise above these casualties, and through knowledge learn to make them auxiliaries to aid and assist us.

In the treatment of every subject, whether mental or physical, — whether it concerns art, science, or literature, trade, commerce, or agriculture, — two things are always absolutely requisite; namely, facts and ideas, or in other words sense and reason. Guess and theorize as much as we may, we never arrive at useful conclusions until real facts demonstrate our guess to be correct; and, on the other hand, before any real fact can be demonstrated, we must frame some hypothesis, and then set to work to prove its correctness. For all the letters in Nature's great alphabet we are obliged to examine one by one, before we can spell the word we mean. We learn the just value of imperfect attempts only as we perceive to what they lead. Philosophers, and students of science, are no more strictly subject to this rule than are the farmer, mechanic, and merchant. Every attempt to pass beyond the actual boundaries of our knowledge is necessarily at the outset a guess. To prove this guess true or false we bring it to the crucible of real experience; and if by this test the fact is demonstrated, then our guess stands forever after among the things which are and must be accepted.

So far as human observation has gone, in all the

works of creation there are positive laws controlling all things ; and it is reasonable to conclude that every work from the same parental authority must be governed by absolute and unerring law. Every event, therefore, in human experience must be in accordance with law ; and law itself must be the only possible attribute through which perfection can be attained. Consequently, the final summing-up of the whole argument must be an examination into what really constitutes law ; and there my case must rest.

Among all civilized peoples, and by the highest human authority, it has been recognized as essential for the protection of the rights of individuals, that there should be an impartial interpretation of law, and a fair administration of justice. It is the right of every citizen to be tried by judges as impartial and independent as the circumstances of society will admit, to the end that man may be governed by law, and not by men. For this purpose, all testimony is received under peculiar restrictions. No one is allowed to give evidence before a court of justice, except under solemn oath that he will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in the case upon which he is called

to testify. Each juror is solemnly sworn to decide the case, upon the evidence presented, according to his best judgment, free from prejudice or partiality. The judge is bound by sacred oath to give to the jury the true interpretations of the law bearing upon the case, impartially, and free from prejudice. Men have learned by experience that these safeguards are the necessary appendages of law in the exercise of human justice. So admirable and so correct has this system proved, that eminent jurists, after long and patient study into the principles of law as a governing power, have declared that law is from the very bosom of Divinity; and the greatest intellects of the world confirm that declaration. Strictly in conformity with this rule, every individual, when called upon to determine the relation and responsibility he sustains towards God and the world around him, is placed in the position of witness, juror, and judge: the attributes of neither can be dispensed with. The obligation, in all its solemn force, is personally binding upon every one, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and each must receive the testimony presented by himself, free from all prejudice or partiality, and must decide by a fair interpretation of

the law as he finds it enacted by the Supreme Legislator, who is the source and fountain of all law.

In the experiences of all the past, it has been discovered that orderly and absolute law is co-extensive and co-existent with creation. Additional strength is not given to those rights which God and Nature have established by a discovery of the law which governs them. Neither do our natural duties toward one another or toward our Maker receive stronger sanction from being declared duties by the law of the land. Crimes are not more wrong in themselves because parliaments or legislatures declare them unlawful. But every people who may advance intellectually so far that they perceive and proclaim them become true benefactors by elevating the race in the scale of intelligence. Very slowly do men advance so as to perceive the operations of law: as frequently are they discovered by accident as by regular study. Science and art have long struggled with ignorance and darkness; but by intense labor they have made great advances in the discovery of law governing in the works of Nature. It is surely as practically discoverable that the conduct of the human race

toward one another is governed by law as absolute in all the relations of food and clothing, trade, agriculture, or commerce, of success and failure, riches or poverty, as are the laws of science.

The laws governing the mental forces of mankind, although of superior fineness in quality, are nevertheless as tangible and real as those governing the material universe. Every person who strikes out into trade, speculation, or experiment of any kind whatever, and who, from any cause to him known or unknown, strikes upon and conforms to the true law governing in the premises in which he is engaged, will surely attain success and prosperity. Again : if he should not intersect the law that controls the conditions of his enterprise, a total failure would ensue ; and, still worse, if intentional wrong be the moving element that forces one man to injure and disturb another, sorrow, anguish, and affliction in some form, will certainly follow him. This is inevitable in every concern in which man can engage, whether he knows the law or not.

If in science and art these laws govern, then, surely, in all the affairs of human life the same absolute and unchanging law must control, because our very existence is from the same authority.

And thus we perceive an infinitude of wisdom in the words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." For, whenever man shall intelligently and truly seek the great principles of the kingdom of heaven, his interior nature, being of the same spiritual element, will naturally, by sympathy therewith, be immersed into its spiritual wisdom, and become thereby a partaker in its righteousness.

Through the purity of this wisdom he will perceive the controlling law of the spirit, and become necessarily, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, a law unto himself. Through this knowledge *he is* a power, controlling all the elements of mental force beneath him; and all things needed shall be added unto him through this legitimate and tangible knowledge of the causes or laws which control the things he needs.

This is not so strange a proposition as at first sight it may appear; for the foundation and summit of all law is perfect truth, justice, and equity. This is its beginning and ending; this is the whole of it; and the divine laws of the kingdom of heaven must be harmonious with this.

To understand this more perfectly, we must

examine the principles of law as practised among ourselves. The entire system of jurisprudence as practised among men establishes beyond question this principle as the fundamental claim of all law, — that by it justice and equity are administered among men according to the truth presented. While there is so much deception among men, and such great inducements to cheat and to lie, so great are the temptations to evade justice, that even legislators and statesmen are tampered with, and the high courts of justice may swerve from duty; yet the principle is there laid down plainly so as to be read by all men. Blackstone says, “Right and wrong must be first ascertained by law before the law can justly command or prohibit the actions of the members of society.” “The most universal and effectual way of discovering the true meaning of a law when the words are doubtful is to consider the reason and spirit of the law, or the cause which moved the legislature to enact it; for, when the reason ceases, the law itself ought to cease.” “The most rational method to interpret the will of the legislator is by exploring his intentions by the most natural and probable sign. These signs are either the words, the context, the subject-matter,

effects and consequence, or the spirit or reason of the law."

And, again, the very highest principles in all human law, when all other forms of law fail to produce justice and truth, are contained in the law of equity. "The maxims of equity" are sufficient of themselves to establish the reality of law as beyond the control of men. Some of the maxims of equity are, "Equity will not suffer a wrong without a remedy." "He who seeks equity must do equity." "He who comes into equity must come with clean hands." "Equality is equity." "Equity aids the vigilant, not the indolent."

Law underlies the whole superstructure of existence. It is constantly holding its court, and forever giving its verdicts, which are absolute, unchanging, and eternal. With this, no man, sect, or party, can trifle or tamper; for it is a stern reality, forever binding upon all mankind. And, sooner or later, it will produce — through its pains and penalties of sufferings, sorrow, and distress — its legitimate fruits, which are integrity, charity, virtue, and love: for this is the only certificate which can avail us; and man is not so stupid that he will not discover it.

All nations and kingdoms, all religious sects and political parties, as well as all individuals, are directly subject to law: and should they come into this court with the plea of "policy" or "necessity," "expediency" or "custom," they will as surely break down, and receive their just reward, as if they were to go before the tribunals of men with false witnesses; for, as surely as effect follows cause, they will ridiculously fail in their testimony.

Therefore, whatsoever men shall do toward one another in the most minute and simple concerns of daily life, or in the most extensive combinations of political parties or religious sects, unless truth, justice, and equity, between man and man, are truly recognized in all their actions, and accepted as the paramount principle of action, will in all cases return upon us in trial, trouble, sorrows, and difficulties, like so many sheriffs with their writs to us directed, demanding at our doors the full recompense of justice and equity according to the facts. This principle, and this only, is law: this is the foundation-stone upon which the entire structure of all law is reared; and this is the peculiarity incorporated in all the teachings of Jesus Christ. In it lie the power and vastness of his words; for

his words are spirit, and they are life, because they are expressions of law. The most seemingly inconsistent law advanced by Jesus, when compared with human law and conduct, is that requiring man to do for his enemy good things in return for bad, to render good for evil. He says, "But I say unto you that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." When we consider the nature of man, his propensity to overreach his neighbor, and demand all and more than belongs to him, his inordinate thirst for power and place, his constant desire to bring all things under his own control, this proposal has a strange bearing upon us, and possesses a meaning entirely unrecognized in human jurisprudence. It is this: surrounded as man certainly is with this vast world of spirit-influence all attracted or repelled by a congeniality of sympathy, this course of action destroys its power to injure by taking away the conflicting object; for the only means that can defeat this power is the substitution of good for evil: for with good, evil is powerless, and must yield to it, and become a help for good; while resistance and contention increase the power of evil by giving to it the

means of sustenance and strength. Thus, then, to love your enemy is to destroy the influence of that spirit-force which assists your enemy to injure you ; while the absence of this conflicting influence will operate on the spirit of your enemy like a fire, consuming the evil within him. Therefore the command that Jesus instituted, "that ye love one another," is a legitimate law, the only possible provision by which man can obtain the object of his desire, the approval of his own soul, or the approbation of Heaven, or, in more familiar words, his salvation. This is the power inherent in law as a controlling principle ; and this result for the use and good of man its highest perfection, its crowning glory, like the productions of the earth, which are the inherent qualities brought forth by the natural results of the changing seasons ; while the use of these productions for the good of man is the real end, the glory and perfection thereof.

The perfection of all things is the spirit or meaning for good of the thing itself. In like manner, the highest perfection and glory of the Christian law is the spiritual power it unfolds, worked out into practical use for the good of the human soul.

All there is in man more valuable than the brute, all that can elevate him above the lower creations, is his intellectual qualities; and all there is in man of intellect, all that can distinguish him, and ally him unto God, giving the power of thought, ability to love or hate, aptness to plan, contrive, and arrange, is spirit. This only gives authority. It is universal, the same in all humanity: there is no superiority or aristocracy in it; for its temple is the republic of freedom, and —

“He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves besides.”

Riches and honors, health and happiness, are dispensed among men as knowledge unlocks the mighty treasure-house of Nature, where is stored enough and to spare for all the children of earth.

Every advance made in knowledge shows conclusively that the vast resources of Nature locked within her silent storehouse are endless. Each revolving motion on the wheel of civilization brings forth still richer and more varied treasures for the use and benefit of man; and, in every instance where nations or men have absorbed these treasures for selfish purposes and ends, they have proved a

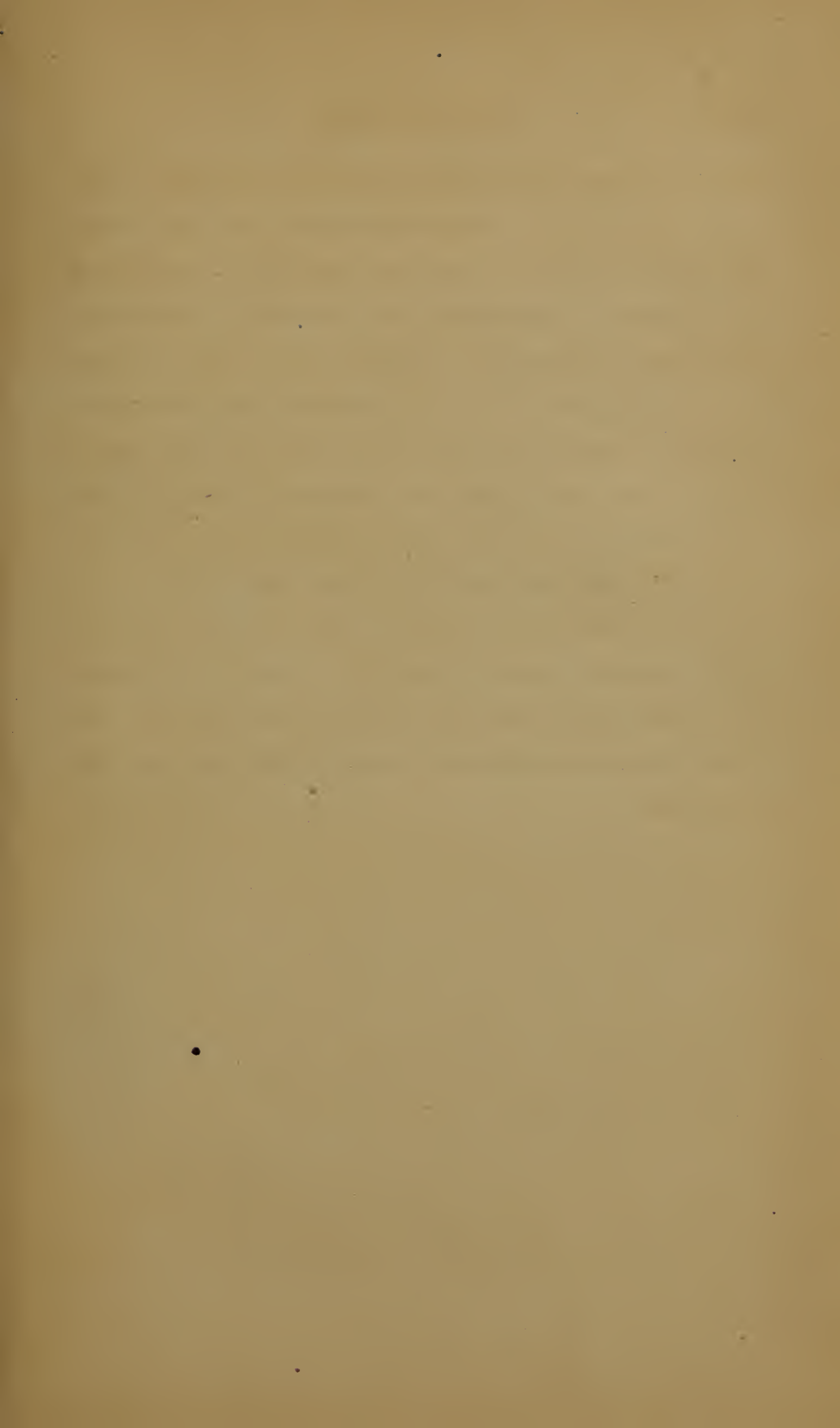
curse rather than a blessing. If there is an intelligence which in the beginning stored up these vast treasures for good, then the use of them in violation of the sacred principle of good must bring evil to him that doeth it: this is abundantly proven by all the past.

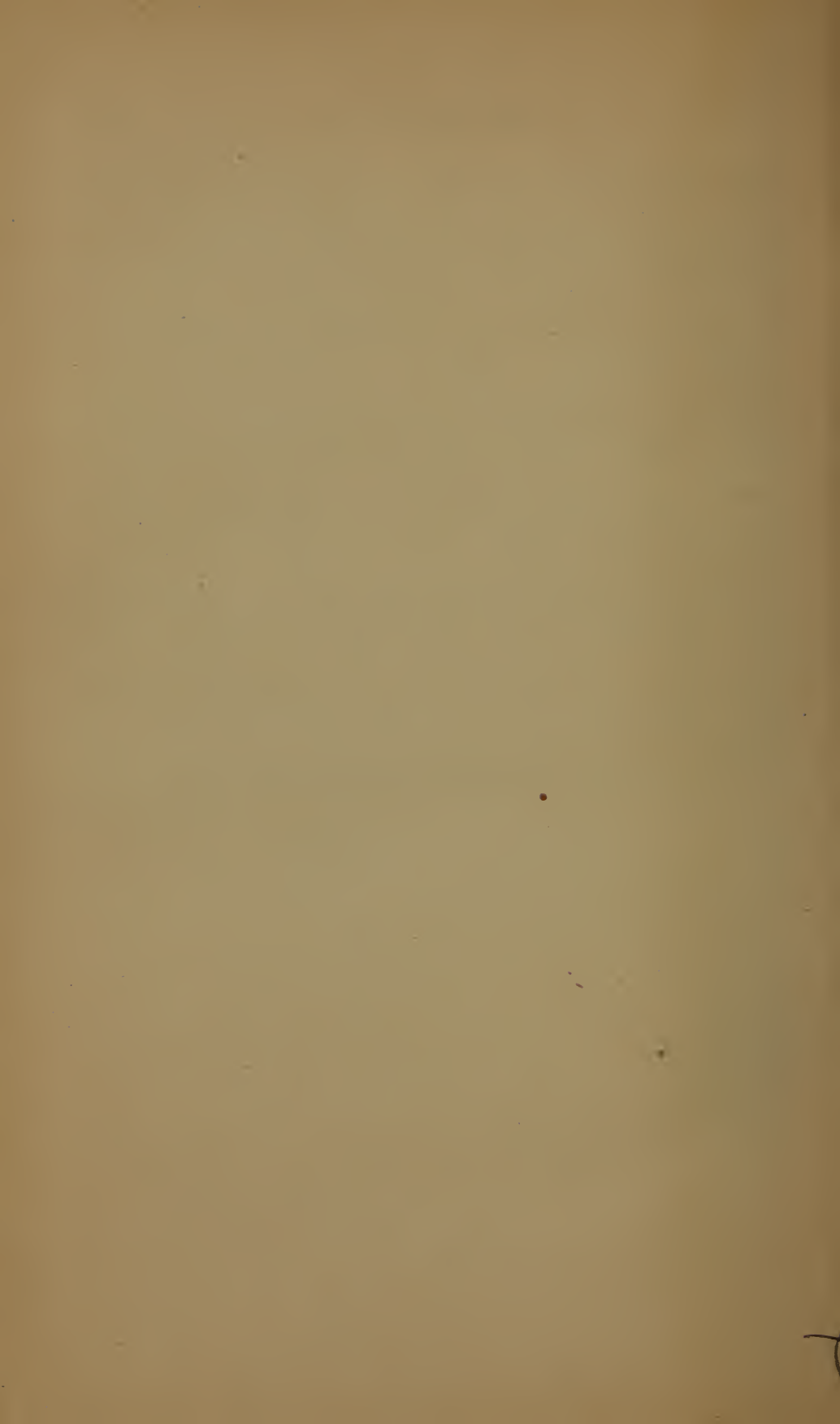
The richest men and nations of the past are to-day a reproach and a by-word among men.

“The aspiring youth that fired the Ephesian dome
Outlives in fame the pious fool that raised it.”

And yet the richest men and nations of to-day receive the homage of praise and veneration from the people, proving our ignorance of the true value of treasure. The day is near at hand when man shall understand and appreciate the proper worth of treasure, and award honor, dignity, and character to man and his labor, because he is the nearest ally unto God, a companion of the angels. Thoughts carried out into plans, secret contrivances or cunning arrangements of every human being, are made up and composed of that subtle influence or element called spirit, and therefore can be as easily read and understood by others as by ourselves, because strictly governed by laws as defin-

able and unerring as are the laws of science. The entire universe of material substances as well as the whole range of human thought, — including the causes of prosperity or adversity, sorrow or happiness, sickness or health, — is totally subservient to the law of the spirit, and within the actual control of man through the agency of that spirit within him; and upon two rules only hang all the principles of this law, viz., “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, — thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”





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